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#### Summary record of the 27th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 2 November 2009, at 10 a.m.

*Chairperson:* Mr. Park In-kook (Chairperson) ..... (Republic of Korea)  
*later:* Mr. Mičić (Vice-Chairperson) ..... (Serbia)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.*

**Agenda item 53: Sustainable development** (A/64/65, A/64/81, A/64/83-E/2009/83 and Add.1 and A/64/259; A/C.2/64/9 and A/C.2/64/10)

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- (i) Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy** (A/64/277)

1. **Mr. Sha Zukang** (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs) observed that the need to find a more sustainable path to development had never been more urgent. Only an integrated approach to addressing the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development would ensure progress in addressing the multiple international crises currently facing the world.

2. The world economy remained crippled by recession, with global unemployment exceeding 6 per cent. Up to 100 million more people than expected prior to the crisis would fall below the poverty line. Fluctuations in food access and availability — exacerbated by the current financial crisis — had

negatively impacted the poorest and most vulnerable groups, hunger and extreme poverty remained the reality for many in developing countries and great disparities in access to resources and opportunities persisted between rich and poor countries. That global inequality remained a fundamental obstacle to sustainable development.

3. Climate change compounded those problems and must be urgently and effectively addressed. A comprehensive global response to climate change demanded intensified engagement in adaptation and mitigation measures, with substantial investment of resources. Adaptation in developing countries alone was anticipated to cost some \$100 billion per year for the next 40 years, but the international community must not let the financial crisis impede its response. The past year had seen more than 343 natural disasters, affecting more than 42 million people and causing economic damage in excess of \$57 billion. With such events undermining efforts to alleviate poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals, more concerted attention must be paid to disaster risk reduction — through measures such as implementation of the Hyogo Framework and the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction — in tandem with strategies for climate change adaptation.

4. The planet faced an unprecedented loss of biodiversity and increased environmental degradation. The world's ecosystems were under heightened pressure from expanding populations, and declining forest cover and increasing soil degradation had damaged the livelihoods of local communities. It was thus absolutely essential to conserve and restore key ecosystems through sustainable management of biodiversity.

5. The convergence of crises demanded a cohesive and collective response that would lay a sound foundation for shared growth and sustainable development, with sustainable patterns of consumption and production. The United Nations system as a whole was committed to supporting international efforts towards transformation to a global green economy, to enhanced food security and reduced dependence on fossil fuels. It would contribute research and analysis, normative and policy support for intergovernmental processes, technical assistance and support for capacity-building.

6. Such fundamental change would require substantial investment in renewable energy and energy-efficient technologies, sustainable agriculture and sustainable management of natural resources. It would require investing in training in new job skills, while simultaneously expanding employment. It would require promoting economic growth, while simultaneously forging ahead in mitigation of and adaptation to climate change. And its success would depend also on the delivery of substantial assistance to developing countries through capacity development and the transfer of knowledge and technology.

7. Countries had a shared responsibility to provide solutions that ensured the economic and social well-being of their peoples and preserved the quality of the natural environment. The importance of maintaining and enhancing participatory action through partnerships — another hallmark of sustainable development — could not be overstated. The international community must engage civil society and the private sector, and work together with local and indigenous communities, to address the full range of sustainable development challenges.

8. **Ms. Wahlström** (Assistant-Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action) introduced the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (A/64/280). The report provided an overview of progress on implementing disaster risk reduction and the Hyogo Framework for Action at national, regional and international levels, over the past 12 months, in response to General Assembly resolution 63/216.

9. While encouraging progress had been made in implementing some aspects of the Hyogo Framework for Action, considerable acceleration and enlargement of action were needed in all priority areas of the Framework if measurable movement was to be achieved towards reducing the impact of disasters by 2015, the end date of the Framework.

10. Highlighting some of the key points of the report, she explained that globally, disaster risk was increasing substantially with regard to most hazards, with the risk of economic loss increasing much faster than the risk of mortality. The first Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction, *Risk and Poverty in A Changing Climate*, launched by the Secretary-General

in May 2009, had identified three main drivers for risk patterns, namely deficient urban and local governance, livelihood vulnerability in rural areas, and declining ecosystems.

11. The report underscored the fact that disaster risk was increasingly urban. Approximately one billion people worldwide lived in vulnerable informal settlements around cities, and that number was expected to grow by 25 million a year. At the same time, a global decline in ecosystems was contributing to increased vulnerability for poor communities, both urban and rural. For example, drained wetlands increased flood risks, while deforestation increased both flood and landslide risks. Cities built and planned for small populations had grown into very large cities with drainage systems that were not adequate for torrential rains.

12. In addition, climate change was already magnifying the uneven nature of the distribution of disaster risk, by simultaneously increasing the hazards and eroding the basis for resilience, and therefore putting more and more people at risk, especially poor communities in developing countries.

13. In general terms, countries were making good progress in strengthening capacities, institutional systems and legislation to address deficiencies in disaster preparedness and response, as well as in enhancing early-warning systems. For example, some lower-income countries had made dramatic strides in reducing mortality risk from tropical cyclones and floods.

14. By contrast, little progress had been made in mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into social, economic, urban or environmental planning and development. Only 57 countries had so far established their national platforms, and a total of 120 Governments had designated official focal points for monitoring implementation of the Hyogo Framework. Those multi-stakeholder mechanisms were becoming more important and more urgently needed as the rate of risk increased.

15. At the regional level, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) had focused on mobilizing and coordinating support to regional and national disaster risk reduction processes. That had included strengthening alliances with intergovernmental organizations, in close collaboration with United Nations agencies and the World Bank. The second

session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction had enhanced information-sharing, coordination and monitoring of progress among all stakeholders, bringing together 1,688 participants from 152 Governments and 137 organizations. It had placed strong emphasis on lessons learned and the development of coordinated guidance for systematic implementation of risk reduction measures. It had been very widely held that urgent action was required to harmonize and link the frameworks for both disaster risk reduction on the one hand and climate change adaptation on the other, within the broader context of poverty reduction and sustainable development. The importance of ensuring that authority and resources were made available to reduce disaster risk at the local and community levels had been also emphasized, as had the role of women as drivers of action.

16. The past year had seen several positive developments towards creating an enabling policy environment for international investment in risk reduction. A number of donor countries had developed new policies in support of increased investment, and the European Union had presented its new strategy for supporting disaster risk reduction in developing countries. The World Bank's Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery continued to develop as a key collaborative mechanism for supporting the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, with total donor pledges exceeding \$90 million in 2007-2008.

17. However, despite those positive trends, the Global Platform had identified a drastic mismatch between the resources required to address disaster risk in developing countries and those actually available, and had called for a substantial scaling-up of action and funding, both from national budgets and from international sources. The Global Platform had also highlighted the usefulness of benchmarks, such as allocating a portion of national budgets, or a certain percentage of humanitarian, recovery or development funds to disaster risk reduction work.

18. While the voluntary contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund for Disaster Reduction had increased over the past year, the growing demands on the ISDR secretariat to support effective follow-up to the Hyogo Framework would require more stable and timely contributions covering several years.

19. Work in 2010 and 2011 would focus on strengthening the international cooperation mechanisms established to reduce disaster risk, increase the mobilization of resources and accelerate practical action in support of disaster risk reduction measures for adapting to climate change.

20. The risks were understood, and the solutions and tools were readily available. They were cost-effective and often very simple, such as making sure that the next school or hospital was built in a safe place, not on a flood plain; or keeping city drainage systems functioning when heavy rain occurred. Disaster risk reduction was not a sector, but an approach to development, which could be sustainable only if development investments were disaster-proof. That required a new institutional approach that went beyond isolated sector initiatives.

21. **Mr. Gnacadja** (Executive Secretary, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Secretariat) introduced the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 63/218 and the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (chapter II of document A/64/202). The main themes of the report concerned the follow-up actions to the ten-year strategic plan; the synergetic activities amongst the three Rio Conventions and the conclusions and recommendations from the seventeenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development related to the Convention to Combat Desertification.

22. The ninth session of the Conference of the Parties, which had taken place in Buenos Aires from 21 September to 2 October 2009, had been the first decision-making meeting of the Parties following the adoption of the ten-year strategic plan and framework for the implementation of the Convention in 2007. Some 36 decisions had been adopted, the topics of which were detailed in the report.

23. In connection with the Joint Inspection Unit report on the assessment of the Global Mechanism, the Conference of the Parties had requested its Bureau to undertake an evaluation of existing potential reporting, accountability and institutional arrangements for the Global Mechanism and their legal and financial implications, including the possibility of identifying a new institution or organization to house the Global

Mechanism. A report on the evaluation would be submitted to the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties.

24. He drew attention to some key recommendations made in the report of the Secretary-General, all related to timely and effective implementation of the Convention as an instrument with the potential to contribute to the ongoing international efforts to address the many global challenges posed by climate change, food insecurity and poverty. They would be found in the part of the report dealing with the seventeenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

25. Speaking on behalf of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, he then introduced the report on the United Nations Climate Change Conference, Poznan, 2008, and its follow-up (chapter I of document A/64/202).

26. The Conference in Poznan had coincided with the financial crisis and the beginning of the economic downturn. That had led to concerns that action on climate change might fall victim to the economic situation, but instead the message had been one not only of progress, but also of support for an economic recovery that would achieve green economic growth. Many unsustainable investments in the energy sector postponed because of the economic crisis could be channelled in a green direction, which also offered safe investment returns.

27. Success in Copenhagen hinged on achieving clarity in the following essential issues: emission reduction targets on an individual basis for industrialized countries; nationally appropriate mitigation actions by developing countries, with appropriate financial and technological support; additional, adequate and predictable financing; and institutional and governance structures that were founded in equity. Together with enhanced action on adaptation, those essential issues had been confirmed by world leaders during the Secretary-General's Summit on Climate Change held in New York in September 2009.

28. The Poznan Conference had been characterized by the desire of the Parties to make progress in the two-year negotiating process on strengthened climate change action which had been launched in Bali in 2007 and was due to conclude in Copenhagen. The Ad Hoc Working Groups had held three formal negotiating

sessions and one informal session. They were currently holding a session in Barcelona, and it was intended that negotiations would be completed at Copenhagen.

29. There was increasing convergence on arrangements to enhance adaptation action, technology cooperation, action to reduce emissions from deforestation in developing countries and capacity-building. However, insufficient progress had been made on two of the essential issues, namely mitigation and finance. It was critical that annex I parties show bold leadership and that finance be provided for both immediate implementation and long-term action.

30. With the limited amount of time remaining, it was increasingly important to focus on a realistic outcome in Copenhagen that would establish goals commensurate with the scale of the problem. Such an outcome would ensure action between the present and 2012, while safeguarding the possibility of a comprehensive outcome.

31. Finally, he drew attention to some conclusions and recommendations, for consideration by the General Assembly, which were to be found at the end of chapter I of the report.

32. **Mr. Banuri** (Director, Division for Sustainable Development) introduced the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (A/64/275); on agricultural technology for development (A/64/258); and on the International Year of Sanitation, 2008 (A/64/169), all under sub-item 53 (a). He also introduced the report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (A/64/278), under sub-item 53 (b), and the report of the Secretary-General on the promotion of new and renewable sources of energy (A/64/277), under sub-item 53 (i).

33. Accompanying his statement with a computerized slide presentation, he explained that the reports covered a wide range of issues that were pertinent to the sustainable development agenda, notably matters of vulnerability, waste, pollution, energy, water, land, food and technology. The Division for Sustainable Development was pursuing ongoing efforts to enhance the quality of the reports that it submitted to the

Committee. It was to be hoped that some progress was visible already, and any guidance would be very welcome as to how the reports could be improved further. In preparing the reports, the Division had worked closely with other United Nations agencies and sought input from outside experts, stakeholders, government reports, and elsewhere.

34. The concept of sustainable development involved recognition that the Earth was a finite planet and that there were ecological limits that mankind could not and must not cross, as well as recognition that, if people were living at the very edge of survival, it would not be feasible to ask them to contribute to a common agenda. However, there was now enough knowledge, enough production and enough capacity in the world for people not to be at the edge of survival: Without equity, addressing sustainability concerns might not be easy. Sustainable development could be seen as a bridge between environment and development but also between North and South, identifying the common agenda on which all could cooperate, between government, business and civil society, between the present and the future, and between a longer-term vision and what had to be done in the short term.

35. If the sustainable development movement could be said to have started with the publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* in 1962, from then on the United Nations system had been involved at every stage, making agreements, holding conferences and establishing treaty bodies and supporting institutions. The progress report of the Secretary-General on Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (A/64/275) identified the areas where the United Nations system had been working on the broad sustainable development agenda. In particular, it contained several important tables which juxtaposed positive trends where achievements had been made and negative trends where there was still work to be done. Those tables covered all of the Agenda 21 items, clustered into four areas: Outcomes in sustainable human development; Outcomes in conservation and management of resources for development; Outcomes in environmentally sound management of toxic chemicals, hazardous wastes and sewage-related issues and radioactive wastes; and Outcomes in institutions and governance. The report also contained a section

containing the views of Member States regarding a high-level event on sustainable development. Many views were positive, but some reservations were also expressed about timing and the accommodation of existing agendas.

36. The report on agricultural technology for development (A/64/258) stressed that agriculture should be treated as a knowledge sector, with investment in knowledge being fundamental. It also took the view that the sector needed to be integrated into national sustainable development strategies. A central issue of the sustainable agriculture revolution was how to achieve increases in productivity while maintaining ecosystem integrity. Many findings on those issues had emerged from the seventeenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, and details were provided in the report.

37. Sustainability of agriculture depended on appropriate investments: there was a need to invest in research into adapted technologies for local agro-ecological conditions; in extension, especially for smallholders and women; in farmers' education and training; in the physical infrastructure of agriculture; and in the scaling-up of best practices, both in agriculture and in rural development.

38. Vulnerability was the focus of the report on the follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (A/64/278). The report identified the structural, institutional and physical sources of vulnerability as a barrier to the achievement of sustainable development, and also chronicled national efforts, including strategies, assessments and policies to overcome that barrier. The report also provided a road map for the review process of the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy, including the tying together of the stakeholder consultations.

39. The report on the International Year of Sanitation, 2008 (A/64/169) also juxtaposed positive achievements with negative areas where more work was needed. The successes included the fact that sanitation was now being treated as an important matter, to be incorporated into national policies; that integrated frameworks were being established; that five regional conferences had served to strengthen political commitment to the achievement of sanitation-related targets; and that

national partnerships — a key feature of the sustainable development approach — had been created in many countries. By contrast, however, without significant further increases in national efforts and global support, targets of the Millennium Development Goals related to sanitation would not be achieved.

40. The Secretary-General's report on the promotion of new and renewable sources of energy (A/64/277) called for a major surge in investment in renewable energy, in pursuit of three goals: to increase the share of renewable energy in the total energy mix, to increase the access of poor countries and poor households to modern energy services in general and renewable energy in particular, and to achieve a rapid reduction in the cost of renewable energy, such that it would become the natural and default solution to climate change. The report also called for increased investment in research and development, both regarding renewable energy itself and for related fields such as batteries, grids and efficiency.

41. **Ms. Ratsifandrihamanana** (Director, New York Liaison Office of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) observed that mountains were fragile ecosystems that were the source of half of the planet's freshwater. They were repositories of rich biological diversity, popular destinations for recreation and tourism and areas of important cultural diversity, knowledge and heritage. Being extremely vulnerable to the impact of global warming, mountain ecosystems were early indicators of climate change. Consequently, there was a need to ensure the ecological health and the economic and social improvement of mountain areas, for the sake both of mountain inhabitants and of people living in lowland areas. Many of the world's most impoverished and food-insecure people lived in mountain regions.

42. Awareness of the importance of mountain peoples and environments had increased since the adoption of chapter 13 of Agenda 21 at the Earth Summit in 1992. Commitments had been strengthened during 2002 with the International Year of Mountains and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which had resulted in the launch of the Mountain Partnership, a global alliance aiming at protecting the mountain environment and enhancing the livelihood of mountain communities. Yet, despite that growing awareness and despite the many positive results achieved, there were still key challenges to achieving sustainable development and poverty alleviation in mountains.

Those challenges included: the growing demand for natural resources including water and wood; the consequences of erosion, deforestation and other forms of watershed degradation; the increasing occurrence of natural disasters; increasing out-migration; the pressures of industry, transport, mining, agriculture; and the consequences of global climate change.

43. The Food and Agriculture Organization was honoured to be the lead coordinating agency for International Mountain Day celebrated on 11 December every year, with the current year's focus being on disaster risk management.

44. The Secretary-General's report, prepared in cooperation with the Mountain Partnership secretariat, described the status of sustainable mountain development at the national and international levels, including an overall analysis of the challenges that lay ahead, and provided suggestions for consideration by the General Assembly as to how to continue to promote and sustain development in mountain regions around the world.

45. Much of the substantive work was being done by countries themselves. The issues that were being addressed included education, climate change, indigenous matters, high-quality products and value-chain approaches, ecosystem management and improved governance of natural resources, but much remained to be done. She drew attention to the many areas where further work was needed, listed at the end of the report. In order to achieve all of those objectives, there was a clear need for higher levels of funding and investment, enhanced coordination and collaboration, and a stronger enabling environment.

46. **Mr. El-Habr** (Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Regional Office for West Asia) introduced the report of the Secretary-General on the oil slick on Lebanese shores (A/64/259), which provided an update on the progress made in the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 61/194, 62/188 and 63/211 on the oil slick on Lebanese shores resulting from the bombing of El-Jiyeh power plant in July 2006 and complemented the information presented in previous reports of the Secretary-General on the subject (A/62/343 and A/63/225).

47. **Mr. Mičić (Serbia), Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.**

48. **Ms. Castaño** (Director of the UNEP New York Office) introduced, on behalf of the Executive Director of UNEP, the report of the Governing Council of UNEP on its twenty-fifth session (A/64/25).

49. The session had taken place at a time of escalating economic, social and environmental crises. The world was in economic recession, food security was severely threatened and the most recent projections of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change suggested that climate change was likely to occur much faster than previously thought. During the ministerial consultations, environment ministers and deputy ministers had expressed concern that environmental degradation and widespread changes resulting from human activity, together with natural processes and the loss of ecosystem services and goods, were barriers to the attainment of internationally agreed development goals and sustainable development.

50. Ministers had tackled head-on the issue of how to respond effectively to current global challenges. Much of their consultations had revolved around the need to move towards a green economy. Moving towards a green and low-carbon economy would deliver multiple benefits for the international community and Governments in addressing food, energy and water security and would ultimately result in the achievement of sustainable development and the Millennium Development Goals. The term "green economy", as defined by UNEP, referred to an economic system which recognized that the properties of healthy ecosystems were the backbone of economic and social well-being and a precondition for poverty reduction and in which ecosystem degradation costs were internalized and such environmental industries as clean and efficient technologies and sustainable agriculture served as major engines for economic growth, job creation and poverty reduction.

51. The shift towards a green economy required the adoption and implementation of coherent policies that integrated economic, social and environmental aspects, which in turn required collaboration among different sectoral ministries at the national level and cohesion among organizations and institutions dealing with sustainable development at the international level. The transition towards a green economy could not therefore be considered in isolation from international environmental governance. The current global crises provided an opportunity to examine the capacity of national and international governance structures and

their ability to meet current and future environmental and development challenges. High-level political guidance must be brought back into the international environmental governance discussion and clear milestones set in the next three years.

52. By its decision 25/4, the Governing Council had established a consultative group of ministers or high-level representatives, which it had requested to present a set of options for improving international environmental governance to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its eleventh special session in February 2010. The conclusions reached by the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at that session would provide input to, among other things, the General Assembly's follow-up to the measures set out in paragraph 169 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome. The Governing Council process was therefore fully synchronized with that of the General Assembly. Moreover, the General Assembly would decide on the way forward in addressing the challenge of strengthening international environmental governance.

53. Lastly, the Governing Council had adopted sixteen other decisions of importance to the work of the General Assembly and the United Nations system as a whole. They included decision 25/1, entitled "Implementation of decision SS.VII/1 on international environmental governance"; decision 25/2, entitled "World environmental situation"; decision 25/5, entitled "Chemicals management, including mercury"; and decision 25/13, entitled "Proposed biennial programme and support budgets for the biennium 2010-2011".

54. **Mr. Inomata** (Joint Inspection Unit (JIU)) introduced the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of JIU entitled "Management review of environmental governance within the United Nations system" (A/64/83-E/2009/83). The report itself had been sent to United Nations system entity executive heads on 17 December 2008. The Governing Council of UNEP had discussed the report at its twenty-fifth session and had established a consultative group of ministers or high-level representatives, which it had requested to present a set of options for improving international environmental governance to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its eleventh special session, with a view to providing inputs to the General Assembly.

55. Regarding the concern expressed by United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) members in relation to recommendations 8 and 9, he said that CEB members had confused incremental cost funding with additional official development assistance (ODA). The term "incremental cost" referred to the change in total cost arising from the implementation of an additional measure of environmental protection. Such costs should be borne by the international community.

56. That CEB members had accepted most of the recommendations of JIU reflected the close communication and cooperation between JIU and CEB. Many of the recommendations, if properly implemented by the executive heads, would assist Member States in strengthening environmental governance within the system. The Secretary-General and the executive heads concerned should therefore be urged to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session a report on the implementation of the JIU recommendations addressed to and agreed by them as well as appropriate inputs to facilitate their consideration.

57. **Mr. Herman** (CEB secretariat), introducing the note by the Secretary-General transmitting his comments and those of CEB on the report of JIU entitled "Management review of environmental governance within the United Nations system" (A/64/83/Add.1-E/2009/83/Add.1), said that, while climate change had reached the highest levels of global action, many other issues related to the natural environment had received international attention in recent years. They included the threat to the ozone layer, desertification and biodiversity loss and they all posed a major challenge to the achievement of sustainable development. Multilateral environmental agreements were a key component of the response to those and other environmental challenges. The United Nations system therefore welcomed as timely and relevant the report of JIU, which examined the need to strengthen the governance of, and programmatic and administrative support for, such agreements.

58. **Ms. Osman** (Sudan), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group welcomed the adoption by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its seventeenth session, of resolution 17/1, on policy options and practical measures to expedite implementation in agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa and looked forward to the full implementation of the

key policy options in relation to the thematic cluster of issues for the implementation cycle 2008/2009 (policy session). Further implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development required greater emphasis on sustainable production and consumption patterns, with developed countries taking the lead, in line with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The themes of the Commission's eighteenth and nineteenth sessions were particularly relevant to current global challenges. The Group looked forward to participating in discussions at those sessions. The current implementation cycle coincided with preparations for the high-level event on sustainable development, which the Group hoped would provide an opportunity to review and assess progress made since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development and to provide the political impetus needed to bridge the implementation gap. The Group supported Brazil's offer to host such an event in 2012.

59. The vulnerabilities of small island developing States to the vagaries of climate change and other external events were well known. Small island developing States were unable to address such challenges alone and therefore required international support. To that end, adequate resources must be allocated to the Small Island Developing States Unit. The high-level review of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, to be held in September 2010, provided an opportunity to assess progress made, lessons learned and constraints encountered in implementation.

60. Natural disasters had an increasingly devastating impact on lives, property and livelihoods. Despite growing recognition of the benefits of investing in disaster risk reduction, financial resources had thus far been insufficient. The Group supported the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and its mandate to promote public awareness and commitment, to expand networks and partnerships, and to improve knowledge about the causes of disaster and the options for risk reduction. More must be done to develop early warning systems, to increase disaster preparedness and to reduce risks. Developing countries must be assisted in that regard.

61. Climate change discussions must be placed squarely within the context of sustainable development, highlighting all three pillars in an integrated, coordinated and balanced manner. The global nature of climate change required all countries to cooperate to the fullest extent possible and to participate in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, and their national circumstances. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol thereto remained the central multilateral framework for cooperative action to address climate change. The success of the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, to be held in Copenhagen in December 2009, would be measured by the extent to which all parties to the Convention fulfilled their commitments; by developed countries' willingness to adopt ambitious targets in the second and subsequent commitment periods; and by the degree to which the international community assisted developing countries in addressing the consequences of climate change, in particular through new, additional and predictable funding, capacity-building and access to, and development and transfer of, technology. Annex I countries must take serious steps to address the root causes of climate change. In particular, they must change their unsustainable production and consumption patterns, meet developing countries' adaptation costs, adopt more ambitious commitments to reduce emissions and provide the necessary financial and technological support to developing countries.

62. Desertification, drought and land degradation seriously threatened development and the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. The Group acknowledged the role being played by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in helping countries combat desertification and reclaim degraded land. The international community must substantially increase its resource allocation to the GEF focal area on land degradation during the fifth replenishment to allow the increasing demand for services in that area to be met. Moreover, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, must be used to address sustainable

development challenges. The Group called on countries to enter into a renewed partnership towards the implementation of the ten-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention and to pledge to meet the objectives contained therein by 2018, and welcomed the introduction of regional coordination mechanisms and the possible establishment of regional offices.

63. The Group supported the many activities planned by the Convention on Biological Diversity secretariat in connection with the International Year of Biodiversity, 2010, to raise awareness about continuing biodiversity loss, to highlight the urgent need to reduce the rate of biodiversity loss significantly by 2010 and to mobilize global support for the Convention's implementation. It was to be hoped that a broad spectrum of stakeholders would participate in, and contribute to, those activities. The Group looked forward to the successful outcome of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, to be held in Nagoya, Japan, in October 2010. The finalization and adoption of an international access and benefit-sharing regime by 2010 was a priority of the Group. The Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing was urged to complete the elaboration and negotiation of such a regime at the earliest possible time before the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. She underscored the importance of addressing means of implementation effectively and recalled that the achievement by 2010 of a significant reduction in the rate of biodiversity loss would require the provision of new and additional financial and technical resources to developing countries.

64. The development of new and renewable energy was essential, as it would offer developing countries alternative energy sources. The availability of clean alternative energy sources was a prerequisite for attaining internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. Moreover, the promotion of new and renewable energy could alleviate poverty and empower billions of people. To that end, developed country support for the development and transfer of technology was critical. The issue of intellectual property rights should not be used to frustrate the transfer of new and renewable energy technologies.

65. As the leading global environmental authority and the principal United Nations system entity for the

environment, UNEP should, within its mandate, take account of developing countries' sustainable development needs. The outcome of the UNEP Governing Council's twenty-fifth session was critical to the work of UNEP and to the management of environmental issues globally. UNEP could, within its mandate, provide leadership in responding to current environmental challenges. The Group hoped that the medium-term strategy for the period 2010-2013 would help streamline UNEP activities in a manner that guaranteed a proper focus on both environmental challenges and the UNEP mandate. The international community's ability urgently and effectively to implement the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building would be a good measure of its willingness to translate commitments into action. In that regard, she welcomed the decision to mainstream the Bali Strategic Plan into all UNEP programmes. For UNEP to succeed, it must be given adequate financial and technical resources and capacity-building. She called on the United Nations to increase its financial allocations to UNEP from the regular budget and urged donors to scale up their support for UNEP activities and projects.

66. **Mr. Ström** (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the European Union: the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Montenegro and Serbia; and, in addition, Armenia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the European Union welcomed the proposal by the Group of 77 and China to hold the high-level event on sustainable development in 2012. Such an event would provide an opportunity further to mainstream sustainability policies that fostered a green economy and reduced poverty. For the event to be meaningful, however, there must be broad agreement within the General Assembly as to how the event could complement existing sustainable development processes without negatively affecting or diverting resources away from them. The European Union looked forward to participating in discussions about the content and agenda of the event.

67. The essence of sustainable development was meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs. The promotion and integration of economic, social and environmental strategies was a core United Nations system function. Forty years had passed since Sweden had proposed the convening of the United Nations

Conference on the Human Environment, the Organization's first major environmental conference. Today, a new era might be in the making, ushering in an eco-efficient economy and an equitable development model.

68. It was in Member States' interest to ensure that the decisions made by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its seventeenth session were taken up by the relevant agencies and used to guide United Nations operations on the ground. Member States should therefore monitor implementation while also ensuring national-level implementation. The European Union looked forward to the next implementation cycle. The Commission's eighteenth and nineteenth sessions provided an opportunity to produce concrete, coherent and well-coordinated policy solutions for furthering the implementation of commitments relating to its thematic issues, to address interlinkages between those thematic issues, and to address the cross-cutting issues identified at the Commission's eleventh session.

69. The European Union congratulated the Secretary-General on the success of the Summit on Climate Change, held in New York in September 2009, and welcomed world leaders' determination urgently to address climate change and their support for increased action and financing. The General Assembly should now ensure that the Summit's message was translated into a global, ambitious and comprehensive agreement in Copenhagen.

70. The world must adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change, floods, drought and extreme weather. To that end, concrete, swift and adequate support must be given to the poorest and most vulnerable countries. Climate change must be given a gender perspective if effective, durable and equitable outcomes were to be achieved. Women were important agents for development and should therefore be active participants and decision makers in climate change adaptation and mitigation.

71. The European Union stressed the need for a legally binding agreement for the period beginning 1 January 2013 that built on the Kyoto Protocol and incorporated all its essential elements. The European Union wanted all developed countries to undertake to reduce emissions by 30 per cent by 2020, as compared to 1990 levels, and to take immediate action in that regard. A deal on financing would be a central part of any agreement reached in Copenhagen. A gradual but significant increase in additional public and private

financial flows was needed to help developing countries implement ambitious mitigation and adaptation strategies. The European Union was ready to assume its fair share of the global effort by setting ambitious mitigation targets, allowing for offsets and providing public support.

72. The European Union welcomed the operationalization of the Adaptation Fund and the progress made in discussions on mechanisms to reduce deforestation and forest degradation and to promote conservation, sustainable forest management and forest carbon stock enhancement in developing countries. The European Union was discussing ways to enhance cooperation on safe and sustainable low-carbon technologies.

73. It was time for the international community to take action to keep global warming below 2° C. All countries must contribute in accordance with their responsibilities and respective capacities. Global emissions must peak no later than 2020, must be reduced by at least 50 per cent by 2050, as compared to 1990 levels, and must continue to decline thereafter. European Union leaders had recently agreed to reduce emissions by between 80 and 95 per cent by 2050. The scientific findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change provided a common platform for action. The decision by Heads of State and Government, ministers and heads of delegation present at the high-level segment of the third World Climate Conference, held in Geneva, Switzerland, in August/September 2009, to establish a Global Framework for Climate Services could further support decision-making. As scientific evidence evolved, climate change policies must be adjusted. At the same time, the United Nations system must continue to work towards a more coherent response to climate change. The European Union supported the efforts made by the Secretary-General and CEB in that regard.

74. The world was on the threshold of a major transition to a global low-carbon economy. Policies to address climate change, poverty reduction and economic competitiveness must be identified and implemented. Access to modern energy was critical in daily life and essential to industrial progress and urban development. Declining energy investments in 2009 would be particularly problematic for the poor. A clean new deal was needed to promote clean technology and effective energy use. Increasingly, international competitiveness would depend on the ability to

produce and distribute reliable, affordable, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound energy services.

75. One of the best ways to control climate change was to reduce and ultimately to eliminate emissions arising from energy production and use. Underpinning that move would be the promotion of new and renewable energy sources, strong action on enhancing energy efficiency and energy savings, and increased research and development for environmentally sound and socially acceptable low-carbon technologies.

76. The share of primary world energy from renewable sources was expected to remain at 13 per cent between 2005 and 2030. The potential was much greater. The European Union welcomed the establishment of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and its potential contribution to promoting a rapid global transition towards the sustainable use of renewable energy. The European Union had recently decided to join IRENA and would actively promote a fruitful partnership between IRENA and the United Nations.

77. High and fluctuating primary energy prices, increasing global energy demand and energy supply uncertainty called for global efforts to guide investments and technology transfer towards the energy sector. The common aim must be to ensure sustained growth based on environmentally sustainable development for all countries while diversifying energy sources to increase energy supply security.

78. The adoption of time-bound national and regional targets and commitments on energy efficiency, renewable energy sources and access to affordable energy was essential to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Policies that maintained the necessary support for energy access without hindering renewable energy growth, energy efficiency and energy savings should be encouraged.

79. Renewable energies should be developed and used in a sustainable manner. Capacity-building and adequate financial resources were required to promote renewable energy. Many United Nations entities had a role to play in that regard. A coherent approach supported by UN-Energy would be essential.

80. The world was not on track significantly to reduce biodiversity loss by 2010. The European Union was deeply concerned by the ongoing and

unprecedented human-induced depletion of species, ecosystems and genes and was committed to implementing a strong policy response to achieve all the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Concrete action must be taken to reverse the trend at all levels, taking into account the significance of partnerships with indigenous peoples and local communities for sustainable biodiversity and ecosystem services management. Furthermore, a new, ambitious and credible post-2010 global biodiversity target must be identified. At the high-level meeting of the General Assembly to be convened in September 2010, Heads of State and Government should play a prominent role in establishing a new global vision, to be supplemented by concrete biodiversity targets adopted at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to be held in Nagoya, Japan, in October 2010. The European Union also stood ready to participate actively in the International Year of Biodiversity. The negotiation of an international access and benefit-sharing regime should be concluded before the Nagoya meeting in 2010. Biodiversity played a crucial role in combating desertification, land degradation and climate change. Greater cooperation and coordination in those areas would help promote sustainable development policies. To strengthen synergies, there must be effective cooperation among the three Rio Conventions.

81. The European Union had a long history of cooperation with small island developing States and was committed to implementing the Mauritius Strategy. It welcomed the significant progress made and acknowledged the threat posed by climate change to human and national security in small island States. The high-level review of the Mauritius Strategy would offer an opportunity to address challenges to the sustainable development of those States.

82. Mountains and highlands were home to 600 million people, the source of water for over half the world's population and an irreplaceable reserve of valuable mineral resources. The European Union encouraged sustainable spatial planning that aimed to protect biodiversity and to safeguard the cultural heritage of man-made ecosystems; noted the importance of pro-poor policies in ensuring sustainable development in mountain regions; and supported efforts to strengthen women's right to resources and their role in communities and cultures in mountain regions.

83. Desertification and land degradation threatened the very existence of hundreds of millions of people and undermined the stability of fragile States. In many areas, combating desertification was a practical and effective way of adapting to the effects of climate change. Such challenges could not be addressed without continued cooperation and reinforced synergies between the three Rio Conventions. The European Union welcomed the decisions adopted at the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in September/October 2009.

84. Integrated water resource management at the basin level and transboundary cooperation were key to adapting to climate change and to addressing concerns over food production, energy security, economic stability and conflict prevention. Access to safe drinking water, sanitation and good water management was crucial for sustainable development, economic growth, health and well-being. Water was inextricably linked to gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment. Women and girls therefore played a crucial role in water-related activities and investments. Water issues should be addressed at the high-level event on sustainable development to be held, possibly, in 2012. In addition, the European Union would engage in the Tajik proposal to address water issues halfway through the International Decade for Action, "Water for Life", 2005-2015.

85. The European Union was committed to building the capacity of communities at risk through support for the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters. A comprehensive approach should be embraced throughout the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction system. To that end, Member States should make full use of the system's mechanisms. By linking disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, policy coherence could be enhanced and resources more effectively used.

86. Lastly, the European Union welcomed the outcome of the twenty-fifth session of the UNEP Governing Council. The outcome of the reform process and the medium-term strategy for the period 2010-2013 would facilitate efforts to establish strategic frameworks and to pursue results-based management. The decision to begin preparations for a legally binding instrument on mercury was of paramount importance. The European Union welcomed the UNEP process for

establishing an Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and hoped that discussions on how best to mobilize and draw on research-based advice could be concluded by 2010. The European Union wished to see UNEP strengthened and would plead for ambitious reform of the international environmental governance system.

87. **Mr. Bowoleksono** (Indonesia), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which supported the statement made on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that, even though the implementation of Agenda 21 and of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development had generated substantial benefits at all levels and even though internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, had strengthened the sustainable development process, the world remained fraught with poverty and inequity. Moreover, multiple global crises and climate change threatened to reverse decades of development progress. Already considerable challenges could become insurmountable if the international community's approach to development was not rethought and restructured. Never before had there been so much momentum for a global paradigm shift towards green development. Moreover, environmental concerns and economic growth, once considered incompatible goals, were beginning to merge.

88. The high-level event on sustainable development to be held, possibly, in 2012 would provide an opportunity to launch innovative measures that addressed global dilemmas and ushered in a new phase of sustainable development. ASEAN looked forward to contributing constructively to the event, which should focus on ways to promote the full implementation of Agenda 21. The event could also be used to discuss international governance for sustainable development. Indeed, it provided an opportunity to seek political impetus at the highest level for a strengthened international institutional structure for environmental and development governance.

89. The next two years would present an opportunity to build a green development platform based on the three Rio Conventions. The Copenhagen Climate Change Conference, to be held in December 2009, would test the international will to respond seriously to climate change and to move forward on a green economy. ASEAN leaders were committed to contributing actively to the Conference with a view to

ensuring a fair, equitable, effective, flexible and inclusive deal that struck a balance between development and climate imperatives. In addition, the International Year of Biodiversity, 2010, and the International Year of Forests, 2011, should be seen as complementing efforts to eradicate poverty and to achieve food security and should strengthen the commitment to address forests in the global climate response. Moreover, desertification must be addressed through the full implementation of the ten-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (2008-2018).

90. Discussions about sustainable development could not be separated from the need to promote food and energy security. Agricultural technology must play a central role in a sustainable green revolution. Special attention should be paid to helping smallholders increase productivity and adopt sustainable practices. The energy crisis and climate change had accentuated the need for new and renewable energy sources. Adequate financial and human resources must be mobilized and deployed, and technology transferred to developing countries. The United Nations should facilitate the establishment of a multilateral fund and an international centre to advance energy technologies. In that regard, ASEAN supported efforts to make the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building an integral part of the work of UNEP and other United Nations system entities.

91. The world had experienced a staggering increase in the number and intensity of natural disasters. The loss of life, property and livelihood caused by recent disasters in ASEAN member countries hampered both the achievement of sustainable development and regional integration processes. Heads of State and Government participating in the fourth East Asia Summit, held on 25 October 2009 in Cha-am Hua Hin, Thailand, had reaffirmed their commitment to pursue effective disaster risk reduction in a spirit of partnership and cooperation and had recalled that disaster risk reduction was a priority area of cooperation. Closer cooperation among relevant stakeholders was key to ensuring timely responses. In that connection, he mentioned the importance of building national and local capacity and developing early warning networks.

92. ASEAN recognized the specific vulnerabilities of small island developing States. Indeed, ASEAN

member countries were vulnerable to sea level rise caused by climate change. Ocean issues must be mainstreamed in climate change discussions. The potential damage to global food security and livelihoods was a matter of great concern. The high-level review of the Mauritius Strategy would provide an opportunity to re-emphasize the vulnerabilities of small island developing States and to address the factors hampering their efforts to achieve sustainable development. The full participation of all development partners was vital if the review was to be a success and the national capacity of small island developing States enhanced.

*The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.*

**General Assembly**

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**Second Committee****Summary record of the 28th meeting**

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 2 November 2009, at 3 p.m.

*Chairperson:* Mr. Mohamed Cherif Diallo (Vice-Chairperson). . . . . (Guinea)**Contents**Agenda item 53: Sustainable development (*continued*)

- (a) Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (*continued*)
- (b) Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (*continued*)
- (c) International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (*continued*)
- (d) Protection of global climate for present and future generations (*continued*)
- (e) Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (*continued*)
- (f) Convention on Biological Diversity (*continued*)
- (g) Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fifth session (*continued*)
- (h) Sustainable mountain development (*continued*)
- (i) Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy (*continued*)

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*In the absence of Mr. Park In-kook (Republic of Korea), Mr. Mohamed Cherif Diallo (Guinea), Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.*

**Agenda item 53: Sustainable development (continued)**  
(A/64/259, A/64/83-E/2009/83, A/64/83/Add.1-E/2009/83/Add.1, A/64/81, A/64/65, A/C.2/64/91 and A/C.2/64/101)

- (a) **Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (continued)** (A/64/275, A/64/274, A/64/258, A/64/169 and A/64/301)
- (b) **Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (continued)** (A/64/278)
- (c) **International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (continued)** (A/64/280)
- (d) **Protection of global climate for present and future generations (continued)** (A/64/202)
- (e) **Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (continued)** (A/64/202 and A/64/379)
- (f) **Convention on Biological Diversity (continued)** (A/64/202)
- (g) **Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fifth session (continued)** (A/64/25, Supplement No. 25)
- (h) **Sustainable mountain development (continued)** (A/64/222)
- (i) **Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy (continued)** (A/64/277)

1. **Ms. Coyo-Felson** (Belize), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that both the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States were

fundamental components of the overall sustainable development framework. CARICOM welcomed the General Assembly's decision to convene a high-level review conference to take stock of the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy and decide on action to further address the vulnerabilities of small island developing States. In addition to considering national assessment reports, the conference should also assess action taken at the subregional and global levels to integrate the issues affecting those States in the broader sustainable development framework. The Secretary-General should prepare a report with a thorough assessment of implementation of the Strategy, and the international community should provide relevant information to assist with the final review. The preparatory process outlined in the Secretary-General's report (A/64/278) was crucial, and CARICOM feared that the Secretariat was not doing enough to lay the groundwork for the preparatory process. The Committee should agree on a date for the conference in September 2010 and issue a firm mandate to the United Nations system to take immediate steps to ensure that the necessary arrangements for the preparatory meetings and the high-level conference were put in place, and Member States should receive the necessary assistance for the preparation and timely submission of their national assessment reports. She recognized that some Governments had already responded positively to appeals for contributions to the trust fund established to support the Mauritius Strategy process and urged the widest participation and support from the international community in the process leading up to the review conference.

2. A regional Climate Change Strategic Framework had emerged from the thirtieth meeting of CARICOM Heads of State and Government, held in Guyana in July 2009, and the Community's Declaration on Climate Change called for ambitious and decisive action to address adaptation and capacity-building, mitigation targets to limit average global surface temperature increases to well below 1.5 degrees Centigrade, and the establishment of a well-financed framework to address the adaptation needs of the most vulnerable countries. At the Summit of the Alliance of Small Island States in September 2009, CARICOM Heads of State and of Government had elaborated their expectations for the Climate Change Conference to be held in Copenhagen in December 2009. It had unanimously agreed that avoidance of adverse climate change impacts on small island developing States

should be one of the key benchmarks for assessing the action needed for a global response, and that parties to annex I of the Framework Convention on Climate Change should reduce their collective greenhouse gas emissions by more than 45 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020, and more than 95 per cent below 1990 levels by 2050.

3. The slow pace of climate change negotiations and diminutive ambition exhibited by negotiators was serious cause for alarm. The Committee should issue a strong, urgent call to all leaders to muster the necessary political will and conclude an effective and legally binding agreement which should place adaptation and mitigation on an equal footing and provide necessary and adequate funding and transfer of technology. The agreement should be based on the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capability, and take into account the best scientific evidence available.

4. CARICOM member States were highly dependent on imported petroleum and petroleum products, and thus highly vulnerable to the volatility of the energy market, which threatened access, affordability and energy security. They were also concerned about the negative environmental, climate and social impact linked to the use of fossil fuels. A regional energy programme, aimed at significantly increasing the use of renewable energy, sought a coordinated renewable energy development approach and was mandated to develop and implement a sustainable energy roadmap and strategy. CARICOM was also collaborating with the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme in a new project to assist small island developing States in developing a sustainable energy sector.

5. A strong international framework was needed to support the research, development and deployment of renewable energy technologies through appropriate policies, incentives and resources. The General Assembly should emphasize the importance of renewable energy for sustainable development and focus on action to raise awareness of the potential of renewable energy; to improve access and affordability particularly for the most vulnerable; to give incentives for research, development and deployment of renewable energy technologies and encourage appropriate policies at all levels to that end; and to encourage adequate sustained financing and consider innovative ways for further promotion of the renewable energy sector.

6. **Mr. Jiménez Sauma** (Mexico), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, said that challenges remained to the achievement of truly sustainable development based on the three development pillars: economic, social and environmental. In that respect, he hoped that the Committee could reach a consensus during its current session on Brazil's proposal to hold a "Rio + 20" summit, which had great policy merit and could lead to tangible results. The Rio Group looked forward to discussing, at the eighteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, its experience in the areas of transportation, chemicals, waste management, mining and production patterns and sustainable consumption, all of which were equally important and must be addressed in a balanced way in the debates and in the Secretary-General's reports. The Group would also be participating actively in the Commission's Regional Implementation Meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean to be held in Antigua, Guatemala, in November 2009.

7. In order to achieve a reduction in the current rate of biodiversity loss by 2010, the international community must demonstrate a high level of commitment to the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. In that respect, he drew attention to decision IX/20 adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, on options for cooperation for the establishment of marine protected areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction, and paragraph 42 of decision VIII/24. The Convention's Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing must complete its task of developing an international regime for access to genetic resources and fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from their use prior to the 2010 Conference of the Parties. Rio Group countries would be actively participating in activities commemorating the International Year of Biodiversity.

8. Desertification affected one fourth of the territory in Latin America and the Caribbean and soil degradation in particular was a serious and unprecedented problem in the region. As desertification would exacerbate the vulnerability of communities living in affected areas, especially indigenous communities, the Rio Group supported the work of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the Regional Implementation Annex for Latin America and the Caribbean, and particularly, the results of the ninth Conference of the Parties to the Convention. That would allow the region to continue to

implement measures and programmes on soil recovery for agriculture, land for production, techniques to prevent water scarcity in irrigation zones and access to financial mechanisms for the provision of resources to mitigate and reverse desertification.

9. While the region had contributed very little to climate change, it would suffer disproportionately from its impact, particularly affecting poor communities. Mitigation efforts must be strengthened. An effective, fair and long-term agreement must be reached at the Copenhagen Conference in December 2009, in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capacities. The Rio Group fully supported the United Nations Framework Convention and other relevant negotiations. In line with their historic responsibility in the context of the Framework Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, developed countries must endeavour to achieve the ambitious goals of cutting emissions and financing, adaptation, technology transfer, international cooperation and capacity-building in developing countries.

10. Natural disasters caused a significant annual loss of lives and resources. The Rio Group was particularly hard hit by such phenomena, of which the frequency, scale and consequences were growing. International cooperation, especially regarding the transfer of technology for establishing early-warning systems, contingency plans and adaptation strategies was thus needed. There was also a need for convergence of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, and national, regional and subregional disaster relief mechanisms should take both issues into account. The Rio Group was committed to strengthening the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and endorsed the results of the second session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction designed to provide strategic guidance and coherence for implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015.

11. The production and consumption of illicit drugs also threatened sustainable development and had an adverse impact on the environment and social and economic consequences. The international community should broaden its regional and multilateral cooperation efforts and support countries' efforts in accordance with national policies.

12. **Mr. Lippwe** (Federated States of Micronesia), speaking on behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States represented at the United Nations, namely, Fiji, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Tonga, Vanuatu, and his own country, the Federated States of Micronesia, said that sustainable development was an issue of critical concern to those States owing to their geographic remoteness, limited economies of scale, narrow resource base, susceptibility to the impacts of climate change and severe disruption by natural disasters. Implementation of the Mauritius Strategy remained inadequate in the Pacific region, leaving the people in those islands in poverty. While some progress had been made in those States towards implementing adaptation strategies and addressing their vulnerabilities, and support had been received to that end, a number of hurdles remained, including limited technical, financial and human resources. The global economic crisis had exacerbated the lack of financial resources and threatened to further reduce support provided to those States. Donor assistance to deliver real outcomes for the people of those islands was needed. The international community must thus actively engage in the review of the Mauritius Strategy to ensure that real progress could be made.

13. Pledges to prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference in the climate system were insufficient. In the framework of the Alliance of Small Island States, the Pacific Small Island Developing States had clearly articulated the need for greenhouse gas emission reductions, with a view to keeping global temperatures from rising more than 1.5 degrees Centigrade above pre-industrial levels, and Alliance members had sought a rise as far below that as possible in the light of the predicted severe negative impacts on small island States of a warming of 2 degrees Centigrade, as predicted by the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Even with major emission cuts, the global temperature would continue to rise beyond small islands' capacity to adapt. Therefore, in addition to honouring the official development assistance (ODA) pledges made, developed countries should commit to providing 1 per cent of their gross national income to developing countries for adaptation and mitigation projects, and share advanced technologies for renewable energy and adaptation.

14. The Pacific Small Island Developing States would stand firm on their mitigation needs at the Copenhagen Conference; the quality of their future and, for some States, their very survival, depended on it. Accepting anything less would mean agreeing to drought and destruction of freshwater supplies, severe food production losses caused by flooding, erosion and saltwater intrusion into agricultural areas, ocean acidification and coral bleaching in their seas. Severe increases in the intensity and frequency of natural disasters would destroy communities, force displacement and cause loss of life. The melting of the Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets, not taken into account in the Fourth Assessment Report, would cause a major rise in sea levels which particularly threatened the low-lying atoll islands of Kiribati, the Marshall Islands and Tuvalu with loss of territorial integrity.

15. Renewable energy was key in helping to solve the climate crisis and to ensuring energy security. In the Pacific, a number of renewable energy sources were available and projects had been pursued to improve their uses, thereby reducing reliance on fossil fuels. Many Pacific islands had made strong commitments to increasing their use of renewable energy, even though the region's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions was negligible. In that regard, adequate financing and assistance with technological development were critical. The agreement to be reached in Copenhagen would need to facilitate access to new technologies, including access to intellectual property rights, to help strengthen the role of renewable energy.

16. **Mr. Bhattarai** (Nepal), speaking on behalf of the Group of Least Developed Countries, said that the recent food, fuel and financial crises coupled with climate change had eroded potential to achieve the goals and commitments of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development. For least developed countries to achieve sustainable economic development, increased investment in their economic growth and long-term economic development was needed, which required sincere implementation of internationally agreed commitments, including that of providing a given percentage of gross national product as ODA, and the commitments of the Brussels Programme of Action. The Fourth Conference of the Least Developed Countries, to be held in Turkey in 2011, would be an opportunity to strengthen global partnership for sustainable development in those countries, and its successful conclusion required active

engagement by partners, the United Nations, multilateral agencies and the least developed countries. Developed countries must increase financial assistance to developing countries, reduce or cancel their debt, curb trade protectionism, open their markets, transfer technology and help build capacity in those countries.

17. Extreme poverty in least developed countries remained an obstacle to their sustainable development and must be addressed. The 2010 review of the Millennium Development Goals should further galvanize support for sustainable development in those countries. An increased international partnership for investment in sustainable and long-term agricultural development was essential for achieving food security, as was greater market access for agricultural products from least developed countries and stable commodity prices. Any response to the economic crisis should take into account the special vulnerability of least developed countries, and the outcomes of relevant meetings in the current year should be implemented through an action-oriented follow-up process.

18. Least developed countries, many of which were small island developing States, needed a sustainable framework for addressing adaptation and financial assistance in coping with the negative impact of climate change, for which they were least responsible. Increased availability of resources and technology for adaptation and broad participation by least developed countries in clean development mechanisms should be part of the sustainable development agenda and negotiations in any climate change deal. The post-Kyoto climate change agreement must not accept compromises on the sustainable development objectives of the least developed countries.

19. The need to adopt alternative, clean, green and renewable energy without compromising the development needs of the least developed countries should be part of the global sustainable development agenda. Increased use of crops for biofuels should take into account the food security needs of the most vulnerable population in the least developed countries. Also needed was a comprehensive framework for addressing the impacts of disasters in those countries — such as prolonged droughts, erratic rainfall, floods and extreme weather patterns — especially by building resilience to natural disasters, substantially reducing disaster risk and building capacity for disaster mitigation. The Hyogo Framework for Action should be implemented taking into account the special

vulnerability of those countries to natural disasters. Also, efforts to reduce social inequality must be strengthened at all levels in least developed countries.

20. The least developed countries attached great importance to the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission on Sustainable Development, especially those focusing on the need to address cross-cutting issues and to focus on the special needs of least developed countries. There should be a holistic, comprehensive, coherent approach, taking into account the special needs of the least developed countries. Genuine global partnership was required to strengthen the main pillars of sustainable development.

21. **Mr. Ramafole** (Lesotho), speaking on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), which aligned itself with the statement made by the representative of the Sudan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that mountains were natural development assets: they housed biodiversity, harboured much of the world's remaining biological heritage and attracted a great deal of eco-tourism. They were home to one tenth of the world's population, and contained most of the world's river sources, supplying water for domestic, agricultural and industrial use. However, mountain ecosystems were very fragile, and climate change, environmental degradation, exploitative mining and unsound agricultural practices constantly depleted the richness of their biological heritage. Natural and human activities exposed mountains and their inhabitants to the socio-economic ills of development, notably poverty, unemployment, human displacement, poor health and land degradation.

22. Targeted multisectoral intervention was thus needed including: promotion of integrated watershed development programmes through the effective participation of the local population in preventing further ecological disturbances; an integrated approach to conservation of land, water, plants, animals and human resources; development of early-warning systems and disaster-response teams; and promotion of alternative livelihood opportunities, particularly through development of employment schemes aimed at increasing the productive base. Institutional support was also needed to improve agricultural production and productivity on a sustained basis. While mountain regions shared many problems, the solutions were often very specific to particular micro-niches, even within the same area. Therefore, field-based scientific knowledge and human capacity-building were needed,

as was contextualized and locally applicable research aimed at the protection and restoration of mountain ecosystems. The Community reiterated its support for the implementation of chapter 13 of Agenda 21, paragraph 40 of the World Summit on Sustainable Development Plan of Implementation and the Tokyo Declaration for the International Year of Mountains (2002). He called on the global Mountain Partnership programme to extend its coverage to support sustainable mountain development initiatives especially in countries with low financial capacity.

23. **Mr. Sipangule** (Zambia), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that the Group was committed to responding effectively, through the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), to the challenges of poverty and the economic, financial and food crises which threatened to reverse decades of reforms geared towards making Africa more attractive to private capital and towards attaining the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. In the context of NEPAD, there was a recognized need to align development with each country's priorities, particularly in coordination with the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme. The Commission on Sustainable Development must be strengthened and focus on actions that enabled implementation at all levels, as outlined in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. The African Group supported the convening of a "Rio+20" Conference in 2012 to review implementation of Agenda 21, which would be a forum for identifying measures and creative approaches to overcome barriers to implementation.

24. The African Group called on the international community and particularly developed countries to honour their commitments under the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy, with a view to increasing the financial and technical resources available to small island developing States. A coordinated, coherent and systematic approach would help to ensure the full and effective implementation of both initiatives. On the subject of disaster reduction, the Group supported the NEPAD Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and its Programme of Action and stressed the importance of full implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015. While African countries were making efforts to build their resilience to disasters, the international community must support measures intended to improve their response capacity.

25. Africa was the continent most vulnerable to climate change, with limited capacity for adaptation, and its major economic sectors were also affected by existing developmental challenges such as poverty, ecosystem degradation and conflicts. The African Common Position on climate change (2008) and the Nairobi Declaration on the African Process for Combating Climate Change (2009) highlighted the imperative of addressing the impacts of climate change on national development efforts. The Common Position in particular identified an urgent need for enhanced human, institutional and systematic capacity-building initiatives for climate change mitigation and the provision of adequate and predictable financial and technical assistance for adaptation projects. It also proposed establishing partnerships based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The United Nations Framework Convention and initiatives such as the Secretary-General's initiative on climate change in September 2009 should help foster a united response to that issue. The outcome of the upcoming Copenhagen Climate Change Conference must recognize Africa's urgent need for support in the implementation of adaptation measures.

26. Desertification and land degradation posed a threat to the sustainable development, and the environment in particular, in Africa. He thus called for adequate and predictable resources to implement the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and support for developing countries with capacity-building to gain more access to financial resources and technology transfer. The decisions reached at the ninth Conference of Parties to that Convention must also be implemented, particularly the proposal to establish a scientific body to monitor the phenomenon of desertification.

27. It was vital to make greater progress in implementation of the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and to achieve a significant reduction in the current rate of biodiversity loss by 2010. Current efforts to achieve that target were woefully insufficient.

28. A substantial increase in the contribution of renewable energy sources to the total energy supply was an urgent imperative. The Group recognized the need to diversify energy supply and to develop cleaner, more efficient, affordable and cost-effective energy technologies and ensure their transfer to developing countries on concessional terms as mutually agreed.

29. **Ms. Blum** (Colombia) said that timely, comprehensive solutions based on shared but differentiated responsibilities must be found to the many challenges humanity currently faced, including that of climate change. Colombia was particularly vulnerable to climate change, with its 28 islands with more than 100,000 inhabitants, its long coastline, its mountain ecosystems and the world's second largest biodiversity reserve. Yet Colombia's average greenhouse gas emissions were lower than the Latin American average, which in turn was lower than the world average; indeed, with its 578,000 square kilometres of rainforest, Colombia was a net producer of oxygen and a small contributor of carbon dioxide. Colombia's *Familias Guardabosques* programme, supervised by the United Nations, involved more than 90,000 rural families in a collective endeavour to protect forests, keep them free from illicit crops and oversee their recovery. Incentives for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries must be reflected appropriately in the future climate change regime, which should be flexible in order to recognize the efforts made by individual countries. The General Assembly should send a clear and creative message to the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference that reaffirmed the need for a comprehensive, just and ambitious agreement.

30. It was also necessary to adopt a legally binding international regime on access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from their use, which was crucial for combating bio-piracy, protecting traditional knowledge and promoting the biodiversity heritage of countries like Colombia.

31. The Committee's resolution on new and renewable energy sources should go beyond repeating agreed wording and reflect the progress made in that area at the global, regional and national levels. The production and use of renewable energies were crucial to promoting economic and social development, protecting the environment and tackling climate change. In Colombia, 87 per cent of energy was derived from water and comprehensive policies had been promoted for the sustainable production and use of biofuels. Colombia was currently the leading biofuel producer and second-largest ethanol producer in Latin America, using sugar cane and African palm.

32. The General Assembly must address sustainable development in a comprehensive way in order to ensure coherence of international measures, with a

view to promoting global environmental well-being and economic stabilization and social progress, and to recover momentum towards attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, especially the goal of reducing poverty.

33. **Mr. Donovan** (United States of America) said that meeting the challenge of the global climate change crisis was a top priority for the Government of the United States, which had taken historic action domestically, including through a clean energy investment of more than \$80 billion in its economic stimulus package and new vehicle efficiency standards. Efforts were also under way to advance comprehensive climate and energy legislation which aimed to reduce carbon emissions from 2005 levels by 17 per cent by 2020, and 83 per cent by 2050. While the United States must be a leader in the global effort to combat climate change, its action alone — or even action by the entire developed world — was not enough. Developing nations, especially the poorest and most vulnerable, including small islands and least developed countries, must be placed on a path to sustained growth. His Government was committed to reaching a strong international agreement to combat climate change and lead the world to a clean energy future, and was working hard to find consensus in the context of the United Nations Framework Convention.

34. The United States was actively creating policies to advance energy and climate security and would promote economic recovery efforts, accelerate job creation and promote clean energy manufacturing. It had made renewable energy a top priority. It had committed more than \$80 billion for clean energy investment domestically, and had worked internationally to promote new and renewable sources of energy, through the 2008 Washington International Renewable Energy Conference and by becoming a signatory of the statute of the new International Renewable Energy Agency.

35. While the United States welcomed continued work and discussion on sustainable development, it was not convinced of the need for a "Rio+20" conference. There were already numerous agreements governing ongoing sustainable development efforts and another meeting might divert attention from those priorities. It was also necessary to consider whether a high-level meeting was the most effective use of limited resources. Above all, the United States advocated continuing progress towards existing

commitments and spending on actions that produced results directly.

36. In the light of the work done by the Commission on Sustainable Development on agriculture, land use and related topics, and the important ongoing work on food security, the draft resolution on agricultural technology for development (A/C.2/64/L.21) was particularly relevant. The United States supported efforts to increase agricultural technology and innovation of all types and recognized its potential in developing countries to increase rural incomes while reducing poverty and hunger. He commended the UNEP Governing Council decisions on mercury and the new consultative process on international environmental governance in particular. While diverging opinions had emerged in that context, progress had been made to truly improve the governance system. It was important to remember that common priorities were shared in that debate: safeguarding the global environment and working towards sustainable development. The United States was committed to biodiversity conservation and to achieving the 2010 target to reduce significantly the rate of loss of biodiversity. Although progress had been made over the past five years, much remained to be done. Action beyond 2010 would be necessary to combat the current unacceptable levels of biodiversity loss. The United States thus supported developing a post-2010 framework on biodiversity.

37. **Mr. Liu Yuyin** (China) said that, in the context of the current crisis, international cooperation must be strengthened in order to move the sustainable development agenda forward. Monitoring and facilitation mechanisms should be set up to ensure that developed countries honoured their commitments to developing countries in that regard. The Commission on Sustainable Development, which was the only United Nations body with an integrated economic, social and environmental mandate, should be strengthened, while the entire system needed to follow up more effectively the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The Chinese Government supported the proposal of Brazil to host a further summit on the subject in 2012; it attached great importance to sustainable development and had itself adopted a people-centred, comprehensive, balanced and sustainable development strategy, in harmony with nature.

38. Regarding the unique challenges faced by small island developing States in their efforts to achieve sustainable development, he stressed that the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy required the continued leadership of the United Nations, which should enlist greater support in evaluating the future vulnerabilities of the States concerned; it also called for a wide range of partnerships in order to help them meet the challenges.

39. On disaster reduction, the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 would facilitate international and regional cooperation, in a spirit of humanity, neutrality and fairness and respect for the sovereignty of beneficiary countries. Emergency relief should be linked to post-disaster construction; technology and international mechanisms were needed to minimize the damage caused by disasters; and long-term, stable and predictable core resources must be secured for disaster reduction.

40. On climate change, negotiations were bogged down in questions about the desirability of adhering to the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and the Bali Road Map, all of which continued to have China's full support. The Chinese Government had taken and would continue to take all necessary measures in response to climate change, even as it addressed the multiple challenges of economic development, poverty reduction, improving people's lives and environmental protection.

41. Lastly, China called on developed countries to honour their commitments to provide support for international efforts to combat desertification and technology and financing for developing countries to develop new sources of energy, while contributing to world energy security.

42. **Mr. Al-Fayez** (Saudi Arabia) said that improved access to energy resources was a key factor in poverty elimination and sustainable development. Saudi Arabia was therefore encouraging private and public investment to expand its energy production capacity. It was also fulfilling its commitment to protect the environment while seeking to enhance the competitiveness of its industries and integrate them locally, regionally and globally. It recognized the essential development role of the United Nations, which should give priority to economic development,

social stability and environmental and population problems. Decisions needed to be adopted that would preserve the environment while contributing to global economic growth. Lastly, his delegation urged the international community to adhere to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities for addressing climate change and hoped that the Committee's deliberations would lead to practical policy choices that would overcome the obstacles to sustainable development.

43. **Mr. Si Soon Beng** (Singapore) said that, despite the progress made in implementing the Mauritius Strategy, much remained to be done. Support from the international community needed to be increased, in particular through technology transfer and capacity-building. Singapore, for its part, shared its experience and knowledge with other small island developing States under a specific technical cooperation programme. Since it was itself vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change and sea-level rise and had rather scarce water resources, Singapore had developed an integrated approach to water cycle management, which included desalination and water reclamation. Moreover, under a new blueprint for sustainable development, it had set itself the goals of reducing per capita water consumption and raising energy efficiency. It was thus committed to doing its part to achieve global and regional sustainable development objectives, including those set out in the Mauritius Strategy.

44. **Mr. Andanje** (Kenya) said that sustainable development was the key to meeting the global challenges of poverty, food insecurity, climate change and energy security. His delegation accordingly supported the proposal to convene a Rio+20 conference on the subject in 2012. It was to be hoped that the Committee's deliberations would reconcile the differences of opinion regarding that event.

45. Kenya fully subscribed to the approaches of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and of the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and had put in place a national mechanism to complement regional and international strategies. Noting, however, that the efforts of many developing countries, including Kenya, to implement the Hyogo Framework for Action and other key aspects of disaster risk reduction were hampered by limited resources, he urged the international community to support those efforts through financing, capacity-building and

technology transfer. His delegation also called on developed countries to provide adequate and predictable financial and technical assistance to developing countries so as to enable them to respond to climate change while pursuing their development. The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities was particularly important in that regard.

46. He expressed support for the Convention to Combat Desertification and the Convention on Biological Diversity. All countries should work towards the goal of significantly reducing by 2010 the current rate of loss of biological diversity, in line with the commitments made at the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Particular issues to be addressed in that connection were benefit-sharing; ecosystem-based adaptation; financing for conservation efforts; capacity-building; and preservation of related traditional knowledge. Environment had a central role in sustainable development, for which the United Nations Environment Programme could provide leadership. His delegation therefore called on the United Nations to increase the regular budget allocation for that Programme so as to enable it to discharge its mandate effectively.

47. **Mr. Belaoura** (Algeria) said that, notwithstanding the notable progress made in implementing Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the world's most vulnerable people still faced the same challenges of poverty, malnutrition, underdevelopment and pandemic diseases, which affected their capacity to attain the internationally agreed goals. The time had come for an integrated, holistic and practical approach, involving all stakeholders, aimed at achieving sustainable development in line with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. To that end, his delegation called for a strengthening of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

48. In its efforts to combat desertification and deforestation, Algeria had always given precedence to measures to restore vegetation, including a recent operation for the designation of protected areas and a national soil conservation campaign. Algeria, which was chairing the Africa Group since the recent ninth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, intended to put in place a regional coordination mechanism, promote North-South and South-South cooperation for technology transfer and seek increased

resources for the effective implementation of the 10-year strategic plan (2008-2018) to combat desertification.

49. Algeria had been in the forefront of the movement to address climate change, both internationally and nationally, and was particularly active in the development of clean energy sources. Its sustainable development strategy was based on an integrated approach, which took account of the climate threat and of all the country's specific environmental concerns. In accordance with the African common position on the subject, the response to climate change could not be dissociated from efforts to achieve the MDGs, particularly poverty reduction. He expressed the hope that the related ongoing negotiations would lead to an equitable agreement at the forthcoming Copenhagen Conference on Climate Change, with due regard for the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

50. **Mr. Das** (India) said that the current interlinked crises demanded an integrated approach to sustainable development with a threefold emphasis on economic development, social development and environmental protection. That was the key to achieving India's development goals, particularly the eradication of poverty and hunger. However, no developing country's efforts could replace the fulfilment of the commitments of developed countries.

51. He looked forward to a positive outcome in Copenhagen to the current negotiations on climate change, keyed to a central concern with equity and based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. It should acknowledge that developing countries needed to pursue accelerated development and required hugely scaled-up resources to address the challenge of climate change.

52. India accounted for a negligible part of total carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and, even as it pursued its development objectives, would never exceed the average per capita emissions of developed countries. Its climate change action plan gave particular importance to the promotion of renewable energy as part of its effort to ensure affordable energy for its people; that was a key to its priority goal of poverty eradication and required access to clean technologies. It was therefore seeking to promote technology transfer, particularly through public

funding. Lastly, on the question of the Convention on Biological Diversity, India attached special importance to the ongoing negotiations on a related international regime, which should include mandatory disclosure of country of origin of genetic resources; prior informed consent to intellectual property rights applications; and equitable sharing of benefits.

53. **Ms. Roesch** (Guatemala) expressed concern that the prospect of an agreement on climate change seemed increasingly remote. Because that was a global long-term phenomenon, it demanded a strong, coordinated, multilateral response and required countries to look beyond their national horizons. The themes of transport, chemicals, waste management, mining and the 10-year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, to be addressed by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its forthcoming eighteenth session, were particularly relevant and should lead to practical, action-oriented and well-funded policy decisions; the present Committee's discussions should focus on how they could be better integrated within the three pillars of sustainability.

54. **Mr. Mbuende** (Namibia) said that Agenda 21 and subsequent conferences on sustainable development had demonstrated that socio-economic development and environmental protection should go hand in hand. The problem remained, however, of fully anchoring sustainable development in rural development plans and strategies, particularly in view of the threat posed by environmental degradation to the livelihoods of rural people. Most developing countries had built programmes and policies around the three pillars of sustainable development but lacked the financial, technological and human capacity to attain their targets. For Namibia, the key was to integrate community-based natural resource management into agriculture and rural development since, in order to ensure natural resource sustainability and conserve biological diversity, rural communities needed to have a sense of ownership of the process of sustainable development and draw benefits from it. In that context, he reiterated the call for support for a sustainable green revolution in Africa, taking into account the critical contribution that could be made to it by small-scale farmers and women farmers. Moreover, in efforts to combat desertification, attention should focus not only on prevention but also on the rehabilitation of degraded land.

55. The current financial and economic crisis did not bode well for sustainable development. It had been reflected in a decline in development financing at a time of increased demand for infrastructure restoration and development, in the wake of natural disasters. Changes in the nature and intensity of disasters called for new response capabilities. His delegation therefore appealed to the international community to support Namibia's efforts to develop its disaster risk reduction capacity.

56. The developed countries should take the lead in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, because of their historical responsibility. His delegation was concerned about reports that some developed countries were thinking of withdrawing from the Kyoto Protocol; that would jeopardize the outcome of the forthcoming Copenhagen meeting. He also expressed concern about the lack of coordination between the Secretariat of the Convention to Combat Desertification and the Global Mechanism established under that Convention; it ran counter to the goal of a coherent United Nations development system and, if it persisted, would impair the Organization's ability to address sustainable land use management effectively.

57. **Mr. Guillén** (Peru), referring to the water shortages suffered by his country as a result of climate change, expressed the hope that the Copenhagen meeting would result in binding international commitments to combat its adverse effects and, in particular, that developed countries would undertake to reduce their carbon emissions by 45 per cent and 95 per cent from the 1990 levels by 2020 and 2050 respectively. Peru continued to be in favour of the establishment of a financial mechanism to support climate change mitigation and adaptation measures in developing countries through a \$0.5 levy on each barrel of oil sold; it also supported integrated programmes and plans to that end, financed by the Global Environment Fund or the World Bank.

58. His delegation was also concerned about deforestation, particularly of the Amazon, for the purposes of cocaine production. Urgent measures were needed to combat drug trafficking and related activities, under the shared responsibility of the international community; they should include not only prohibition and prevention but also rehabilitation and sustainable alternatives to coca cultivation.

59. He called, lastly, for increased investment in sustainable mountain development, particularly through innovative financing mechanisms, and for greater recourse to traditional knowledge and know-how in the framing of policies for mountain areas; mountain-related issues should also be more fully taken into account in deliberations on responses to climate change and desertification.

60. **Mr. Hart** (Nigeria) said that efforts to achieve sustainable development had been jeopardized not only by the current global recession but also by the impact of climate change, especially in Africa and small island developing States, which had reduced their capacity to respond to challenges for which they bore little or no responsibility. Nigeria, whose overall development capacity had been particularly affected, nevertheless remained committed to sustainable development and was continuing to take measures to that end, with due regard for sound environment policy and practice, national security, good governance and health, and with special attention to the groups most vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. It had developed schemes to protect its biodiversity and mitigate the effects of drought and desertification, as well as contributing to all other African regional environmental initiatives.

61. His delegation called for a campaign to increase awareness of environmental challenges, particularly in developing countries, with emphasis on the responsibility of all for sustainable development. In that spirit, he looked forward to the conclusion of a comprehensive agreement at the Copenhagen meeting that would ensure substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, facilitate the transfer of clean and renewable energy technologies and improve financing and capacity-building for developing countries, particularly in Africa, which had drawn up a body of common proposals to that end.

62. **Mr. Meñez** (Philippines) said that the current period of great challenges called for a renewed dedication to the spirit of multilateralism and for more equitable sharing of the costs and benefits of globalization. The increasing number of extreme weather incidents highlighted the need for a stronger international response to climate change, particularly through increased efforts to implement the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, while negotiations with a view to the upcoming meeting in Copenhagen must ensure better compliance with

commitments under the Framework Convention on Climate Change. Greater attention needed to be given to addressing the roots of the food crisis, which lay in agriculture, food production and biodiversity; in view indeed of the steady decline in ODA in agriculture, as well as unsustainable agricultural practices, increased population pressure and climate fluctuations, there was a pressing need for greater cooperation, both regionally and internationally. His country was doing its part to promote such cooperation and was at the same time striving for greater energy efficiency and conservation, more secure and affordable energy supplies and renewable, green technology. It was the world's largest producer of thermal energy and was playing a leading role in the development of a green industry. However, the efforts of individual countries were not enough: the fragile global ecosystem could be healed only by all nations acting in concert.

*The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.*

**General Assembly**

Sixty-fourth session

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**Second Committee****Summary record of the 29th meeting**

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 3 November 2009, at 10 a.m.

*Chairperson:* Mr. Mohamed Cherif Diallo (Vice-Chairperson). . . . . (Guinea)**Contents**Agenda item 53: Sustainable development (*continued*)

- (a) Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (*continued*)
- (b) Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (*continued*)
- (c) International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (*continued*)
- (d) Protection of global climate for present and future generations (*continued*)
- (e) Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (*continued*)
- (f) Convention on Biological Diversity (*continued*)
- (g) Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fifth session (*continued*)
- (h) Sustainable mountain development (*continued*)
- (i) Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy (*continued*)

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*In the absence of Mr. In-kook (Republic of Korea), Mr. Mohamed Cherif Diallo (Guinea), Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.*

**Agenda item 53: Sustainable development (continued)**  
(A/64/259, A/64/83-E/2009/83, A/64/83/Add.1-E/2009/83/Add.1, A/64/489, A/64/81, A/64/65, A/C.2/64/91 and A/C.2/64/10)

- (a) **Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (continued)** (A/64/275, A/64/274, A/64/258, A/64/169 and A/64/301)
  - (b) **Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (continued)** (A/64/278)
  - (c) **International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (continued)** (A/64/280)
  - (d) **Protection of global climate for present and future generations (continued)** (A/64/202)
  - (e) **Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (continued)** (A/64/202 and A/64/379)
  - (f) **Convention on Biological Diversity (continued)** (A/64/202)
  - (g) **Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fifth session (continued)** (A/64/25, Supplement No. 25)
  - (h) **Sustainable mountain development (continued)** (A/64/222)
  - (i) **Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy (continued)** (A/64/277)
1. **Mr. Djoghla** (Executive Secretary, Convention on Biological Diversity), introducing the note by the Secretary-General on implementation of United Nations environmental conventions (A/64/202), emphasized the importance of the upcoming Copenhagen Conference on Climate Change and of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on

Biological Diversity to be held in Nagoya, Japan, in October 2010. If climate change was the problem, biodiversity was part of the solution. Healthy ecosystems were essential to the health of the atmosphere. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, more than 30 per cent of all known species might disappear before the end of the century owing to climate change.

2. At the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, world leaders had agreed to reduce substantially the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010. The third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, to be issued in May 2010, would demonstrate clearly that the international community had failed to fulfil that commitment. The slogan of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity was "Living in harmony, into the future", and that of the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity was "Biodiversity is life, biodiversity is our life".

3. The Nagoya meeting was expected to adopt a new 2011-2020 strategy plan, post-2010 targets and an international regime on access and benefit-sharing, inter alia. It would be preceded by a City Biodiversity Summit, in which 300 mayors were expected to participate. There would also be associated youth, non-governmental and women's summits.

4. The official launch of the International Year of Biodiversity would take place in Berlin, in January 2010, and would be followed by a high-level event in Paris at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, where a new travelling exhibit on biodiversity would be launched. The General Assembly would also mark the International Year of Biodiversity in September 2010, holding the first meeting of Heads of State and Government on biodiversity. The closing would take place in December 2010 in Japan and would coincide with the launch of the International Year of Forests, 2011. The following year, 2012, would be the twentieth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The International Year of Biodiversity was an important step in addressing biodiversity loss. The support of all stakeholders was needed to respond to the challenge.

5. **Ms. Adam** (Switzerland) said that achieving sustainable development was a challenging but was

necessary endeavour to ensure long-term survival and well-being on the planet. At the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, the idea of holding another World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2012 had been introduced. A new high-level event on sustainable development could give new impetus to common approaches and solutions for addressing environmental, economic and social challenges. With regard to scope, the event could assess implementation of the previous major sustainable development conferences, identify and address existing gaps in the international regime, critically assess existing governance structures with regard to environment and sustainable development and make proposals to improve the effectiveness of governance in regard to sustainable development.

6. The preparatory process would be decisive and must be fine-tuned to the scope and expected outcomes of the event. The Commission on Sustainable Development, which already had an established multi-year work programme, was not the appropriate preparatory body for the high-level event. The event should achieve a far-reaching declaration targeted to specific key subjects strengthening effectiveness, coherence and innovation of sustainable development worldwide.

7. The importance of combating climate change and achieving a successful conclusion to the ongoing negotiation process under the auspices of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change could not be overemphasized. Tangible progress in disaster risk reduction and the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action were also needed. Both processes were critical to preserving development progress. Important processes which would culminate during 2010 included negotiations on an international regime of access and benefit-sharing and the establishment of an intergovernmental platform on biodiversity and ecosystem-related services.

8. **Mr. Mbou-Mylondo** (Congo) welcomed the universal or near-universal agreement on the need for energetic and coordinated action under a successor agreement to the Kyoto Protocol. It was very important that the will to reduce emissions be reflected in an acceptance of the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. It was also important that the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities be fully applied.

9. Thanks to the negotiations on the role of forests in climate, which had started in 2005, the world had gained greater familiarity with the forests of the Congo Basin. Their immense contribution to the preservation of local, regional and planetary ecosystems was indisputable. Conservation and sustainable forest ecosystem management were priorities for the Congo, which played a clear role, particularly within the Central African Forest Commission, in support of countries with tropical forests. It was also one of the Forestry eleven (F-11) tropical rainforest countries.

10. The Congo had recently joined the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD), aware that the current status of the Central African subregion, which was heavily forested and had low rates of deforestation, could undergo rapid change if the future REDD mechanism was not appropriate and lacked sufficient incentives. In developing countries that were having difficulty responding to the financial crisis, forest products were often the sole source of income for local and indigenous populations. That could lead to disaster at the national level, particularly in Africa.

11. The Seventh World Forum on Sustainable Development had been held in Ouagadougou in October 2009. African countries relied on their own efforts and on African solidarity above all and, at the Forum, had reaffirmed and strengthened their strategy for combating climate change based on adaptation, clean energy use and financing. Priorities set had included integrating adaptation to climate change into policy at all levels; capacity-building, capitalizing on existing expertise and dissemination of good practices; use of clean energy, reforestation and conservation of forest ecosystems; strategic re-evaluation of support to African agriculture in advance of the deadline for attainment of the Millennium Development Goals; establishment of an environmental body within the African Development Bank that would mobilize resources for adaptation and mitigation; and easing access for African countries to various types of financing.

12. The African Union regarded climate change as a very serious matter, and the Congo was active on the issue within the Conference of African Union Heads of State and Government. The UN-REDD programme, as the cornerstone of the partnership between Africa and the developed countries, particularly in the area of

preserving carbon sinks and the need to strengthen carbon markets, must be taken into account for future agreements to be viable.

13. The Congo Basin was home to nearly 24 million people, most of whom depended on the forests for their livelihood. They made great sacrifices to preserve the forest and its biodiversity, and therefore expected offsetting measures from the international community enabling them to embark on the only sustainable economic path — green growth.

14. **Ms. Navarro Barro** (Cuba) said that global warming, rising sea levels, deforestation, the use of food for fuel in industrialized countries, shortages of fossil fuels and irrational water usage all posed threats to life on the planet. Unless production and consumption patterns in developed countries changed, climate change would accelerate and threaten mankind's very existence.

15. Developing countries would never achieve the goals of Agenda 21 unless developed countries had the political will to lead change through technology transfer, provision of resources and capacity-building. True international cooperation would be required to implement Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the Millennium Development Goals and the 2005 World Summit Outcome. The United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen could provide a framework for action that would ensure the world's survival, if the richest countries made commitments commensurate with their historical responsibility for the current situation. Cuba supported Brazil's initiative to convene a conference in 2012 on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in order to take stock of commitments and the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

16. Developed countries, which had caused the environmental deterioration, must not only fulfil their commitments on official development assistance but must also contribute to economic growth in the South and provide access to clean technologies and their markets. It was time to move from words to action and step up to the challenge of saving the human race.

17. **Mr. Woldearegay** (Ethiopia) said that Africa's ecosystems were the most fragile in the world and were highly vulnerable to catastrophic changes resulting from small shifts in global temperature. Many parts of

the continent were already suffering from frequent high-intensity droughts and floods. Compounded by weak adaptive capacity, the situation posed a serious threat to past development gains and could constrain future development in Africa. Anticipated dire consequences included a decline in agricultural production, worsening hunger, water stress, frequent floods, massive migration, conflict over scarce resources and expanded desertification.

18. Agriculture was the dominant sector in Ethiopia, as it was in many parts of Africa, accounting for nearly half of GDP and providing a livelihood for the vast majority of the population. The sector was dominated by small-scale farmers using largely rain-fed and traditional practices, which made the country vulnerable to climate variability. Desertification had claimed significant agricultural land. The minimum temperature had increased, and extreme drought and flood had become more frequent. The droughts created poverty traps for many households, undermining efforts to build up assets and increase income. Destitution was rising every year.

19. Collective action was needed to mitigate the impact of climate change. Greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced, and adaptation measures taken to improve resilience. Strategies should be linked with efforts to alleviate poverty, enhance food security and water availability, combat land degradation and soil erosion and reduce biodiversity loss, inter alia.

20. Such adaptation measures would be costly. Financial and technical assistance from developed countries which were historically responsible for climate change would be required. Gains from adaptation should not be eroded by unabated emissions. Therefore, the developed world should commit itself to reduce emissions, pursue green growth and engage in technology transfer to Africa.

21. It was incumbent on all to ensure the success of the forthcoming United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen. Africa committed itself to remain fully engaged.

22. **Archbishop Migliore** (Observer for the Holy See) said that a durable and comprehensive energy strategy must be found which could meet short-term and long-term needs, ensure energy security, protect the environment and establish concrete commitments to address climate change. It should also be capable of launching a peaceful transition towards a more

efficient global economy in which energy consumption and fossil fuel use could be lowered.

23. Progress in the use of renewable energy was important for poverty eradication. Development objectives could be linked to the application and dissemination of new and renewable energy sources, and energy cooperation should be oriented towards poverty alleviation and adjusted to economic and fiscal instruments. The group of developing countries had more than 40 per cent of installed renewable power capacity, more than 70 per cent of existing solar hot water capacity and 45 per cent of biofuel production power capacity. However, low-carbon technologies often had very high initial expenses. Access by the poor to innovation was essential.

24. Access to energy had a strong positive impact on health, education, nutrition and income. Improved energy access required better infrastructure, which in turn required the involvement of local institutions best able to identify the types of energy, financing and marketing most appropriate to a given area. Where access was limited, existing energy efficiency should be improved and conservation promoted.

25. The human and environmental costs should be part of every discussion on identifying appropriate energy services. Environmental exploitation without regard for environmental concerns could provide short-term growth, but had a cost that was borne primarily by developing countries, the poor and the vulnerable. Since energy consumption had an impact on future generations, renewable energy initiatives should be based on "intergenerational justice", which transcended national and economic boundaries. Future generations should not be burdened by the current excessive energy consumption; lifestyle change was therefore imperative.

26. **Mr. Motter** (Observer for the Inter-Parliamentary Union) said that actual emissions cuts depended to a large degree on the introduction of legal and fiscal reforms — a political question in which parliaments had to reconcile the competing demands of their constituents. People were still divided between those who appreciated the dangers of climate change and wanted to take action, and those who worried about cost. Yet, in fact, the long-term cost of inaction would be far greater than that of action today. Parliaments must work to bridge the divide and achieve a win-win solution for rich and poor, labour and industry, developed and developing. While some parliaments

had supported strong carbon emissions reduction commitments, others were finding such agreements elusive.

27. The one hundred and twentieth Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, held in Addis Ababa earlier in 2009, had adopted a resolution on climate change that showed considerable consensus on some policy approaches. The resolution noted, that pursuing cost-effective measures that already had a lot of public support could do much to address climate change. Such measures included new approaches to urban public transit, home building codes, school curricula, agricultural methods, including organic farming, and population policy. Such solutions were widely available but underutilized. The resolution also recognized that the necessary shift towards renewable energies from fossil fuels would require active government intervention. Wind power, solar energy and other renewable energies were gaining ground in countries with a supportive legislative and fiscal framework. Subsidies for fossil fuels must be eliminated. Indeed, higher taxes on fossil fuels might be required. Massive investment in research and development would be necessary, and developed countries must lead on that issue. Nuclear energy must not be considered a renewable energy, as uranium was a finite resource and also because of the associated environmental and human costs of nuclear energy. Similarly, too much reliance on biofuels was inadvisable, as that sacrificed arable land and compromised food security.

28. The economic crisis should serve as a catalyst for the transition to a green economy, with stimulus investment in green solutions. That would be discussed shortly in a meeting between parliamentarians and United Nations officials. The Inter-Parliamentary Union would also be represented at the Copenhagen Conference.

29. **Mr. Dall'Oglio** (Observer for the International Organization for Migration) said that rising sea levels, deforestation, dryland degradation and natural disasters would affect development, livelihoods, settlement options, food production and health and lead to large-scale displacements of people. Policy coherence must be built, nationally and internationally. National adaptation programmes of action did not include migration considerations, and national migration policies did not incorporate environmental and climate change considerations. The implications of climate

change for human mobility had not been considered in the United Nations Framework Convention. In the successor document to the Kyoto Protocol, the humanitarian consequences of climate change should be taken into account. Member States must discuss how to fill legal, operational and capacity gaps associated with climate change and human mobility and allocate sufficient additional funding to the issue. The International Organization for Migration had begun to try to close the research and analysis gap on the nexus of climate change and population mobility. In the period leading up to the Copenhagen Conference, the Organization would release a volume on migration and climate change. Stakeholder capacity must be built up, and collaboration must reach across disciplines, to include climate science, geography, migration, development studies and health.

30. Because of the particular vulnerabilities of small island developing States, it was hoped that during the coming year there would be discussions on the possible displacement of people due to climate change. It was gratifying that the text on adaptation being negotiated included language on migration, displacement and relocation of persons affected by climate change. Migration should be recognized as an element of broader adaptation strategies, and the resilience of vulnerable populations to climate change and environmental degradation should be increased. Management of environmental migration was multidimensional and required an interdisciplinary approach.

31. **Ms. Fröberg** (Observer for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies) said that the Federation's approach to sustainable development addressed the underlying causes of vulnerability by reducing disaster risks, adapting to climate change, strengthening food security and livelihoods and applying the Hyogo Framework for Action. Communities with sustainable livelihoods, good health care and access to a strong civil society were better able to withstand hazards, and such development gains must be protected from disasters. Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into development work remained a top priority for the Federation. In 2009, 113 of its national societies had improved safety and resilience for 13 million people. Nearly 4 million more people had been reached by the Federation than in 2008, and 33 more national societies were currently involved.

32. Disaster risk reduction measures at the community level were the most effective way to save lives and protect development gains. The World Disasters Report, published by the Federation in 2009, made a strong argument for greater focus on early warning and early action.

33. Climate change adaptation was urgent. Climate change was not a future threat, but a key driver of disasters currently. Disaster response systems must be strengthened. Adaptation must include disaster risk reduction, disaster preparedness and response and must be integrated into longer-term risk reduction, sustainable development and poverty reduction strategies. Timely and clear weather information was necessary for vulnerable communities to plan livelihood activities, and resources were necessary to scale up preparedness at the community level.

34. A significant increase in community resilience investments was needed. Investments in early warning systems, water management and ecosystem restoration would reduce adaptation costs, which, according to current estimates, would reach 250 billion dollars per annum by 2020.

35. **Ms. Barth** (International Labour Organization (ILO)) said that the jobs and climate crises had their roots in the overemphasis on the economy in the development model, to the detriment of the social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Investments in a green recovery were part of longer-term structural change and should not wait for economic recovery.

36. Governments and employers' and workers' organizations from ILO member States had recently adopted the Global Jobs Pact, underscoring that greening the economy was indispensable and pressing. The ILO Green Jobs Programme was working towards a greener, fairer global economy and had been joined by some of the emerging economies as well as countries struggling with the impacts of climate change. It was understood that climate change mitigation and adaptation would help to create a high-employment, low-carbon economy by boosting clean energy and environmental services, as well as through the greening of all enterprises. Green jobs promotion would yield sustainable enterprises, poverty reduction and a job-centred recovery. Green jobs, while not a panacea, were indispensable.

37. The myth that action on the environment was bad for jobs must be dispelled. Well-designed, environment-related investments were beneficial for employment. Green sectors would create more jobs than would be lost in other sectors. At the same time, policies, investments and benefits would be required to assist those whose jobs might be lost during the transformation to a low-carbon economy. The social protection floor concept would be useful.

38. Where coherent sustainable policies had been put in place, in China, Germany, Brazil and elsewhere, hundreds of thousands of green jobs had been created, more than outweighing job losses in emission-intensive sectors. Inaction on climate change would have a detrimental impact on labour markets.

39. **Mr. Kennedy** (United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)) said that renewable energy was becoming a global success story. In 2008, added power capacity from renewables in the United States and the European Union had exceeded added power capacity from conventional power, according to the Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century. UNIDO was helping developing countries to benefit from that growth through technology transfer, support for clean energy policy, capacity-building assistance with rural electrification and the promotion of research and development, inter alia. Most of the Organization's technical cooperation was centred on bioenergy, hydropower and solar and wind energy. UN-Energy, an inter-agency mechanism of 20 United Nations and multilateral agencies chaired by the Director-General of UNIDO, was the channel for increased United Nations cooperation in the area of energy.

40. Recently, UNIDO and UN-Energy had worked with the Global Environment Facility to develop a large energy component for the Facility's Strategic Programme for West Africa. The programme scaled up renewable energy for rural electrification and supported energy efficiency measures. About 26 projects proposed by the countries of West Africa had been selected for final implementation.

41. UNIDO had organized of two recent global renewable energy forums, one in Vienna and the other in León, Mexico. The former had highlighted the need for enhanced international cooperation on energy, and at the latter there had been discussion of ways to provide energy justice to the one third of the world's

population without access to affordable energy sources. It was no longer a question of whether to move to renewable energy, but of how to deploy renewable energy at the required scale and pace. The coming decade would be critical for the future of renewable energy.

42. **Mr. Brandstätter** (Austria) said that his delegation wished to inform the Committee of the international energy conference entitled Towards an Integrated Energy Agenda Beyond 2020, held in June 2009 in Vienna. It had been organized by UNIDO, Austrian Development Cooperation and the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis. At the conference, 93 countries had been represented, with participants including policymakers, civil servants, scientists, energy experts and representatives of United Nations organizations and non-governmental organizations. The conference had adopted recommendations to set energy access goals and energy efficiency targets, to identify technologies needed to address climate change and energy access and catalyse their diffusion, and to strengthen UN-Energy and provided it with a support structure.

43. **Mr. Valero Briceño** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that, in order to achieve sustainable development, action in the economic, human and environmental spheres was necessary. As long as speculation, exploitation of human beings and overexploitation of natural resources continued, sustainable development would not be possible. His country had a new economic development model based on sustainability. Its environmental component involved preservation, protection, restoration and amelioration, with local communities playing a leading role in designing and managing projects. The specificities of each region were taken into account. A wide range of energy sources were being developed that were in harmony with nature. Water resources problems related to supply and various economic activities were being remedied through the use of a geographical information system. The production of refrigerant gases that depleted the ozone layer had been prohibited, measures had been taken to reduce vehicle emissions and the accuracy and timeliness of weather alerts had been improved.

44. Although it was an oil producer, his country had ambitious environmental programmes and low carbon emissions. It supported the idea of a sustainable development conference in 2012 at which developed

countries committed to complying with the principles of sustainable development.

45. In, his report on the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (A/64/275), the Secretary-General had not delved into the true reasons for the greenhouse effect and global warming. The global crisis had been caused by the predominance of an irrational economic model imposed by capitalism. The Secretary-General's report stated that access to fossil fuels was lacking in some developing regions, while others were particularly vulnerable to price shocks. It did not refer to the main reasons for the increase in oil prices, nor did it discuss programmes promoted by oil-producing countries to mitigate the effect of high oil prices on developing countries. In the framework of the Energy Security Treaty, signed at the third PetroCaribe Summit held in Caracas in 2007, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela had implemented 44 pilot renewable energy projects in the areas of solar, thermal, photovoltaic, geothermal and wind power. The Secretary-General's report did not refer to the speculative practices of multinational oil companies or to the taxes imposed by developed countries on energy use, which were a determining factor in high oil prices. Given continued dependence on fossil fuels, research, development and new technologies were important in order to develop more sustainable use of such fuels.

46. Developing countries, which were not primarily responsible for climate change, were suffering particularly from the impact of the calamity. Those who were responsible were still refusing to take the necessary steps to combat the scourge.

47. **Mr. Ali** (Syrian Arab Republic) expressed surprise that the Secretary-General, in his report on the oil slick on Lebanese shores (A/64/259), had noted Israel's failure to compensate Lebanon for the environmental damage caused by the oil slick but had not mentioned its failure to compensate the Syrian Arab Republic. Paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 63/211 had called for compensation for all countries affected by the oil slick, for the costs of repairing the environmental damage. The report did not, therefore, fully reflect the mandate set out in the resolution. His Government's position on the matter was contained in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General (A/C.2/64/10).

48. Given Israel's failure to comply with the resolution, the General Assembly should condemn

Israel's conduct and call on it to compensate the Syrian Arab Republic.

49. **Mr. Resnick** (Israel) said that, in his country's experience, agro-industrial innovation could play a critical role in sustainable development. Extending modern agricultural techniques to the hardest hit areas of the developing world would help reduce poverty and ensure their self-sustenance while also taking into account environmental imperatives. Israel's extensive agricultural research and development and its integrated approach to the management of water and land resources had made advanced agriculture possible in arid regions for domestic consumption and export. Existing agricultural technologies and techniques included cost-effective smallholder irrigation systems, production practices that emphasized rain-fed agriculture, water harvesting systems, high-quality genetic materials, value-added agricultural production, agro-technological awareness among young people, forestation, prevention of soil erosion and improvements to pastures.

50. Increased investment was needed in research and development, together with a permanent mechanism for transferring know-how to where it was most needed. Cooperation between Israel's scientific research establishment, government institutions and private sector had been crucial, combining political vision and a regulatory framework, scientific know-how and creativity, and market-oriented development of innovations. That triangular model could be central to the global sustainable development agenda and was the subject of Israel's proposed draft resolution on agricultural technology for development.

51. **Mr. Biya** (Cameroon) said that the decisions adopted a month earlier at the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification would be vital to the implementation of that Convention and would in turn inform the upcoming Climate Change Conference. He reiterated that all international legal instruments in the area of sustainable development were inextricably linked and complementary.

52. In the Sahara region of Cameroon, annual temperatures were rising and precipitation levels were dropping, causing the desert to advance steadily. Protected areas were becoming more fragile and farmland was being lost owing to drought and reduced soil fertility. In twenty years, the agricultural belt for

crops such as cotton and corn had moved over 300 kilometres southward. On the Atlantic, Cameroon's coastal ecosystems were deteriorating as a result of sedimentation, flooding and rising sea levels. In the south, there was a need for conservation of the vast forest and rational use of resources.

53. To tackle those challenges, Cameroon had taken measures that included national environmental and forest development plans, a reforestation campaign and legislation that created protected areas for greenhouse gas sequestration, required sustainable management and environmental impact studies, and regulated access to forest resources. A network of protected areas covering 18 per cent of the country's surface area safeguarded its biodiversity. Projects aimed at doubling hydroelectric capacity and boosting agricultural production to ensure self-sustenance had been launched.

54. Reminding the Committee that Cameroon's forest was part of the Congo basin, the second largest ecological lung in the world after the Amazon rainforest, he hoped that the international community would include a mechanism in the agreement on the post-Kyoto regime that would compensate his country and others for forgoing full use of their forest resources and thereby maintaining their carbon capture capacity.

55. **Mr. Okuda** (Japan) said that his country could contribute to sustainable development by sharing its experience of doubling its gross domestic product in 30 years with no increase in energy consumption by industry. On climate change, Japan would aim to reduce its emissions to 25 per cent below the 1990 level by 2020. That commitment was premised, however, on a fair and effective international framework covering all major economies and agreement on ambitious targets. Japan would also provide more financial and technical assistance, since vast resources would be needed to support adaptation efforts by developing countries and small island States. The international community must create a mechanism that not only ensured the effective use of public funds but also facilitated the flow of private investments to meet the needs of those countries.

56. He welcomed the Secretary-General's recommendation to hold a high-level event on biodiversity in September 2010, after which Japan would host the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biodiversity in Nagoya in October 2010. His Government was committed to

helping establish ambitious, realistic and action-oriented biodiversity targets.

57. Disaster risk reduction was an important component of adaptation to climate change, as more intense and frequent natural disasters posed a serious threat to human safety. The Hyogo Framework for Action should be promoted and implemented as a guideline for building the resilience of the most vulnerable communities.

58. Japan recognized that small island developing States and the least developed countries, which were most affected by climate change while contributing least to global warming, required special support. His Government would provide some \$500 million to Pacific island countries over the following three years to assist in protecting the environment and countering climate change, achieving the Millennium Development Goals, promoting human security and overcoming economic vulnerabilities.

59. Before a high-level event on sustainable development was held, thorough consideration should be given to possible themes, timing and necessary preparations as well as to the ongoing workplan of the Commission on Sustainable Development regarding the implementation of Agenda 21. Furthermore, before tackling international environmental governance, Member States should first consider how to achieve maximum results with the limited resources available to the United Nations system. The relevant activities — including multilateral environmental agreements — should be better coordinated and the function of the United Nations Environment Programme should be reviewed.

60. **Ms. Espósito Guevara** (Plurinational State of Bolivia) said that, 20 years after the adoption of Agenda 21 at the Rio Summit, little progress had been made on combating poverty or climate change. The number of persons living in extreme poverty was estimated to have risen to 1.2 billion in 2009, while by 2030 greenhouse gas emissions would be 45 per cent higher than 1990 levels. Desertification was rampant, the list of endangered species was long and South America's glaciers would disappear within a few decades. The current economic model, which had caused the human and environmental crisis, could no longer be applied, based as it was on intensive exploitation of natural resources that failed to take environmental degradation into account in calculating

economic growth. Indeed, greenhouse gas reduction was now being transformed into a speculative market.

61. The climate change crisis was tangible proof of the principle upheld by indigenous peoples that human beings were part of an interdependent system of plants, animals, water and air that must be respected and safeguarded. The challenges now facing the world required a redefinition of sustainable development. Nature must no longer be viewed as merely serving mankind, but as having intrinsic value. Each species, tree, river or mountain had a right to exist independently of human beings. Changing people's mindset would not be easy: the capitalist model had put corporations at the centre of development; the Soviet model had put people at the centre; it was time to put life itself at the centre of all aspirations for development and to recognize that unlimited growth would end in disaster.

62. Man's domination of nature was part of a system of domination that had gradually been countered through the establishment of human rights, economic and social rights, and the rights of women, children and indigenous peoples. It was time to create rights for a vulnerable and defenceless Mother Earth. The current generation was in the unique position of being capable of making a difference at a time when change was crucial.

63. **Mr. Kohona** (Sri Lanka) said that a new development model based on green consciousness might be the way to sustain mankind's future. The development approach of the industrialized countries had been responsible for the increase in carbon dioxide concentrations in the atmosphere, but developing countries would be most vulnerable to the resulting crisis. The issue must be addressed on the basis of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and capabilities. Developed countries must accept their historical responsibility for the problem and cover most of the cost of adaptation by developing countries. They should also cut their per capita emission levels: the proposals being discussed by the Group of Eight countries offered a workable starting point.

64. Incentives must be provided to countries with large tropical rainforests, which were a major vehicle of carbon absorption. Over 20 per cent of Sri Lanka was forested; it should be compensated for refraining from using those resources, perhaps by ascribing a

carbon value to the forests that could be traded on the global carbon market.

65. His Government had established several agencies, policies and programmes dedicated to achieving sustainable development and exploring solutions to emerging economic and environmental challenges. The new policies had been embraced by the private sector, which was actively involved in efforts to promote cleaner production and consumption practices and introduce new environmental management techniques.

66. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation had drawn up an action plan to face threats such as flooding, coral bleach, drought, melting glaciers and insect infestations. The Association had emphasized the need to restore harmony with nature by drawing on ancient South Asian cultural traditions of environmental responsibility and sustainability and had called for cooperation in capacity-building, clean development projects and awareness-raising campaigns. Climate change would be a key theme of the Association's sixteenth summit in 2010. On biodiversity, his Government had begun work on a domestic legal framework for biosafety in accordance with the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

67. Sri Lanka had borne the brunt of the 2004 tsunami: since then, it had established a Disaster Management Centre and introduced a holistic strategy that placed disaster risk management at the centre of development planning. A series of weather stations now monitored weather patterns across the region and a regional agreement on disaster rapid response mechanism would take effect in 2010.

68. **Mr. Rajabi** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that, while the demand for oil was expected to continue rising, diversification of energy resources and a shift to clean and renewable energy, together with the rational use of fossil fuels, could help address the challenges of sustainable development and global warming. Strong cooperation would be needed among Governments, non-governmental sectors and international organizations to mobilize the extensive investments that would be required to bring new production capacity on line and to transport fuel supplies — in particular natural gas — to market. His Government's main sustainable development policies were to encourage private investment in new and renewable energy, subsidize the development of new technologies by manufacturers and design companies and support university research.

69. Developed and developing countries must share renewable energy technologies. Measures to improve energy use included diversifying energy sources and using them more efficiently in combination with cleaner fossil fuel technologies; developing a global liquefied natural gas market; accelerating the development of affordable energy conservation technologies and their transfer to oil-producing developing countries in particular; minimizing oil and gas losses and emissions throughout the production and distribution process; facilitating the provision to oil-producing and oil-exporting countries of affordable technologies to transform solid fuels to liquid or gaseous fuels, control gas flaring and venting, and perform carbon capture and storage or recapture of energy from waste; and supporting regional energy transmission through interconnected electricity grids and cross-border pipelines and trade. Patterns of energy generation and consumption must change: secure, reliable and affordable energy was fundamental to economic prosperity, social stability and political security.

70. **Ms. Mjuwene** (Malawi) said that poverty, rapid population growth and urbanization, pandemic disease and environmental threats undermined Malawi's efforts to achieve sustainable development. The longer action on climate change was delayed, the more elusive sustainable development would become, especially for the most vulnerable groups living in rural areas suffering from environmental degradation. Since 2004, Malawi had put policies, strategies and programmes in place to assist farmers in adopting practices to increase agricultural productivity, protect the environment and free themselves from poverty. Gender mainstreaming was a part of all policies in recognition of women's important role in natural resource management and the choice of technologies to promote sustainable development. The Government was doing its utmost to promote alternative renewable sources of energy, for example, by encouraging women to use efficient locally made technologies to reduce their dependence on fuel wood.

71. Environmental threats must be addressed on the basis of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. Malawi looked forward to achieving a binding consensus at the Climate Change Conference, including on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. While

Malawi's greenhouse gas emissions were too insignificant to cause any worry, her Government stood ready to take appropriate national measures in concert with its development partners in order to do its part to preserve the planet for future generations.

72. Her delegation welcomed the decision to hold the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries in 2011 to take stock of the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action. She called on cooperating partners to continue fulfilling their commitments on development assistance and to provide the resources, expertise and technologies required to strengthen sustainable development in the least developed countries.

73. **Mr. Oumar** (Niger) said that sustainable development was an acute issue for his country because of its geographical location in the sub-Saharan region, which was characterized by poor soil and growing desertification, and because most of the Niger's population depended on natural resources for their survival. His Government had therefore ratified and would do its utmost to implement all of the Rio Conventions. In accordance with Agenda 21, the Niger had established a national council responsible for implementing environmental and sustainable development policy as well as technical commissions on climate change, biodiversity and combating desertification. Action on the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change included building capacity by training experts, establishing a database and preparing a comprehensive report on greenhouse gas effects and adaptation; producing public awareness materials and publishing articles on greenhouse gas; and carrying out a study on technology transfer requirements in the areas of energy, agriculture, sanitation, desertification, habitat, industry and transportation. Several rural and forestry projects were under way aimed at combating desertification and deforestation and promoting biodiversity by improving soil use, maintaining greenhouse gas sinks and assessing the environmental and socio-economic impact of climate change. Funding those activities was one of the Niger's main challenges, for the international community had failed to keep the promises of financing it had made at the Rio Conference. His delegation hoped that the Climate Change Conference would yield real solutions. Any new international agreement must include provisions on technology transfer and financial assistance, while

differentiated emissions reduction requirements should be established for all countries.

74. **Mr. Hackett** (Barbados) said that the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation must remain blueprints for the sustainable development aspirations of small island developing States such as his own. The upcoming review of the Programme and Strategy should be comprehensive and should result in a renewed commitment by all Member States to implement them, including through the provision of additional resources, capacity-building and technology transfer. He urged Member States to prepare constructively for and participate at the highest political level in the high-level event to be held in 2010.

75. The rapid and coordinated response to the global financial crisis, in which no effort had been spared to avert total collapse of the financial system, was a good model for action: a similar response was needed to avert an environmental collapse. A mere fraction of the trillions of dollars that had been spent to rescue private financial institutions — or of the military expenditures of developed countries — could help developing countries adapt to climate change.

76. The Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen must deliver an ambitious and comprehensive outcome based on scientific reality. Those who contemplated that a rise of 2 degrees Celsius in average global temperatures was acceptable would not be confronted with the dire impacts of climate change that Barbados was already beginning to experience at current temperature levels. Even a rise of 1.5 degrees entailed risks from which some small island developing States might not recover. The international community must focus on research and development of renewable energy sources and refrain from spending money on mitigation options that prolonged the life of fossil fuels, which caused great damage and would one day be exhausted. With the right mix of fiscal incentives, the private sector and consumers would easily make the transition to renewable energy. His Government aimed to make Barbados one of the most advanced green economies in the region. The General Assembly should send a clear signal that the promotion and use of renewable energy was an international priority and that no effort should be spared to achieve that goal.

77. **Mr. Hernández-Milán** (Costa Rica) called for a commitment by all countries to make sustainable

development a reality, for the conservation, management and sustainable use of nature were a common responsibility and tackling global warming, resource shortages, pollution and unplanned development were priorities on the international agenda. Given that developing countries were most vulnerable to environmental crisis, a new international order for the transfer of aid, information and technology was required to combat climate change. The success of the upcoming Climate Change Conference would depend on Member States making more stringent commitments based on shared but differentiated responsibilities.

78. Costa Rica was proud of its goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2021, two centuries after its independence. That ambitious goal was possible thanks to decades of work on protecting the country's biodiversity through reforestation, plant and animal protection and an institutional framework for renewable energy use. All of the country's electricity was generated by water, wind or the sun.

79. International cooperation was needed to devise a global disaster risk reduction strategy. Costa Rica, which was especially prone to natural disasters, had included a housing policy for vulnerable populations in its national development plan for 2006-2011 in order to suppress the development of slums, which were often located in high-risk areas. His Government would also extend its risk management programme.

80. With respect to the implementation of Agenda 21, his delegation recognized the need to make renewable energy available to everyone and supported the Committee's efforts to find strategies for transferring technology to the least developed countries. Costa Rica planned to increase its energy supply and ensure energy security through the use of local energy sources that were both economical and environmentally and socially viable. Nevertheless, much remained to be done to reduce the costs of producing renewable energy. The Commission on Sustainable Development was the appropriate forum for discussions that could improve international cooperation. The United Nations must take the lead in overcoming difficulties to consolidate an economic system based on sustainable development for the benefit of all.

81. **Mr. Savostianov** (Russian Federation) recalled that the Commission on Sustainable Development had adopted a number of recommendations to maintain

agriculture as an international development priority. The principal result of its seventeenth session was the understanding that sustainable agricultural development was important not only for the resolution of the economic and food crises but also, in the longer term, for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, poverty eradication and combating environmental degradation.

82. The United Nations Environment Programme continued to play a key role in resolving current environmental problems. At the same time, it had untapped potential. It was gratifying that, at the eighth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests earlier in 2009, Member States had demonstrated long-term thinking and a readiness to compromise, allowing for forward movement on international forest issues. Important decisions had been made on key forest issues, in particular the resolution on forests in a changing environment, and it was hoped that the intergovernmental ad hoc expert group would be able to find mutually acceptable solutions and achieve progress in the financing of sustainable forest development.

83. The recent Summit on Climate Change had demonstrated that there was political support for joint international efforts to combat climate change. A binding political instrument should emerge from the Copenhagen Conference. All countries, and in particular those which had the highest rates of emissions, should sign the new instrument in order for it to have weight. The Russian Federation would insist that the carbon absorption capacities of the Russian forests be more fully taken into account, which had not been the case in the Kyoto Protocol.

84. The Russian Federation welcomed the outcomes of the recent meetings of the Conferences of the Parties to the Convention on Biodiversity and to the Convention to Combat Desertification and attached importance to international collaboration to prevent and respond to natural disasters. The Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction was an appropriate format for developing such cooperation. The second session of the Global Platform, held in June 2009 in Geneva, had been positive overall. Reducing disaster risk should be linked to the achievement of the MDGs.

85. While in principle the Russian Federation did not object to integrating disaster risk reduction into climate change adaptation activity, it was important that other

elements of the Hyogo Programme, such as geological, biological and man-made disasters, were not crowded out or replaced by climate issues. All the Hyogo priorities should receive balanced financing.

*The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.*



# General Assembly

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## Second Committee

### Summary record of the 30th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 3 November 2009, 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Mr. García González (Vice-Chairperson) ..... (El Salvador)

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- (d) Protection of global climate for present and future generations (*continued*)
- (e) Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (*continued*)
- (f) Convention on Biological Diversity (*continued*)
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- (i) Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy (*continued*)

*In the absence of Mr. Park In-kook (Republic of Korea), Mr. García González (El Salvador), Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.*

**Agenda item 40: Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources (continued) (A/C.2/62/L.12)**

*Draft resolution on the permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources*

1. **Mr. Edrees** (Egypt), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/64/L.12, informed the Committee that Bolivia (Plurinational State of), the Comoros, Cuba, Ecuador, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Senegal, South Africa and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) had joined the sponsors.

2. The draft resolution was a reflection of the Secretary-General's report (A/64/77-E/2009/13), which demonstrated that the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, continued to deepen the economic and social hardships of the Palestinian people. The majority of the paragraphs were similar to those of General Assembly resolution 63/201. However, some amended and updated language had been included and one new paragraph had been inserted: the twelfth preambular paragraph, which took note of the recent report by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) regarding the grave environmental situation in the Gaza Strip and stressed the need for follow-up of the recommendations therein.

**Agenda item 50: Information and communication technologies for development (continued) (A/C.2/64/L.11)**

*Draft resolution on building connectivity through the Trans-Eurasian Information Superhighway*

3. **Mr. Jafarov** (Azerbaijan), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/64/L.11, announced that Bulgaria, Estonia, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Korea had joined the sponsors. The draft resolution primarily focused on connectivity issues and the need

to bridge the digital divide, particularly through the Trans-Eurasian Information Superhighway initiative.

**Agenda item 55: Globalization and interdependence (continued)**

**(a) Role of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence (continued) (A/C.2/64/L.13)**

*Draft resolution on development cooperation with middle-income countries*

4. **Mr. Daoud** (Sudan) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/64/L.13 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

**(c) Science and technology for development (continued) (A/C.2/64/L.8)**

*Draft resolution entitled "Creation of a global culture of cybersecurity and taking stock of national efforts to protect critical information infrastructures"*

5. **Ms. Markoff** (United States of America), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/64/L.8, announced that Bulgaria, Estonia, the Republic of Korea and the United Kingdom had joined the sponsors.

**Agenda item 54: Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) (A/64/8 (Supplement No. 8)), A/64/65, A/64/260, A/64/317 and E/2009/80)**

6. **Ms. Tibaijuka** (Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)), introducing the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (A/64/8 (Supplement No. 8)), the report of the Secretary-General on implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) (A/64/260) and the report of the Secretary-General on coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda (E/2009/80), said that considerable progress had been made over the past year in strengthening UN-Habitat to coordinate and implement the Habitat Agenda. However, the economic crisis and an increasing number of climate change-related natural disasters threatened to reverse many of the gains made

towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

7. Nevertheless, there had been encouraging signs that the Habitat Agenda was receiving increased international recognition, including the message to UN-Habitat from President Obama of the United States on World Habitat Day and the events organized by both the United States Government and the European Parliament to mark the day. Increased public awareness and understanding of the Habitat Agenda were essential in order for UN-Habitat to attract investment and to fulfil its mandate.

8. The establishment of the Governing Council as a subsidiary body of the General Assembly had been a major milestone. One of the Council's first decisions had been to convene the World Urban Forum, which had become the world's premier forum for the discussion of urban issues. UN-Habitat intended to use the Forum to elevate the Habitat Agenda still further through the launch of a new World Urban Campaign, which would be an integral part of the medium-term strategic and institutional plan.

9. In the context of global efforts to combat climate change, UN-Habitat continued to underline the importance of international financial support for local adaptation and mitigation plans and technology transfer. It also wished to underscore the linkages between rapid and chaotic urbanization, on the one hand, and the urbanization of poverty, commodity price volatility and climate change, on the other.

10. Recalling that her final term as Executive Director would end in August 2010, she wished to take the opportunity to express her gratitude for the support provided to her over the past nine years. During that period, donor countries had considerably increased their level of funding to UN-Habitat, which had thus been totally transformed and was now in a better position to fulfil its mandate. She hoped that the election of her successor would proceed in a timely manner, since delays in the transition had been one of the reasons for poor performance in the past.

11. **Mr. Ström** (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the European Union, supported by **Mr. Mahiga** (United Republic of Tanzania), commended the outgoing Executive Director on the many improvements that she had made to UN-Habitat over the course of her tenure.

**Agenda item 53: Sustainable development** (*continued*) (A/64/65, A/64/81, A/64/83-E/2009/83, A/64/83/Add.1-E/2009/83/Add.1, A/64/259, A/64/489, A/C.2/64/9 and A/C.2/64/10)

- (a) **Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development** (*continued*) (A/64/169, A/64/258, A/64/274, A/64/275 and A/64/301)
- (b) **Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States** (*continued*) (A/64/278)
- (c) **International Strategy for Disaster Reduction** (*continued*) (A/64/280)
- (d) **Protection of global climate for present and future generations** (*continued*) (A/64/202)
- (e) **Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa** (*continued*) (A/64/202 and A/64/379)
- (f) **Convention on Biological Diversity** (*continued*) (A/64/202)
- (g) **Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fifth special session** (*continued*) (A/64/25 (Supplement No. 25))
- (h) **Sustainable mountain development** (*continued*) (A/64/222)
- (i) **Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy** (*continued*) (A/64/277)

12. **Mr. Shin** Boonam (Republic of Korea) said that climate change was a major challenge to global sustainable development that required an urgent response from the international community. Every opportunity should be taken to build the political will necessary to reach a post-Kyoto agreement in Copenhagen. His delegation therefore commended the Secretary-General for convening the recent Summit on Climate Change in New York.

13. To move the climate change negotiations forward, his Government had proposed the establishment of a registry of nationally appropriate mitigation actions by

developing countries. Furthermore, as a non-Annex I party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Republic of Korea hoped to make a meaningful reduction to its greenhouse gas emissions as an example for developing countries to follow and intended to spend approximately two per cent of its annual gross domestic product (GDP) on low-carbon, green growth programmes as part of a national plan for environmentally sustainable economic growth.

14. The Republic of Korea recognized the urgent need for the international community to be actively engaged in efforts to increase access to safe drinking water. In that connection, his Government looked forward to hosting the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, which should provide a forum for combating the negative effects of drought. Since water issues were directly related to sustainable development, the United Nations should also explore cooperation initiatives designed to enhance the international community's ability to respond to water-related crises.

15. Lastly, his Government supported the convening of a high-level event on sustainable development in 2012 as an opportunity both to review the progress achieved in the implementation of Agenda 21 and to discuss the introduction of low-carbon, green growth policies.

16. **Mr. Khan** (Pakistan) said that the international community's shared vision to combat climate change should be based on the following overarching principles: first, developed countries should meet their emission reduction commitments and agree to deeper midterm and long-term targets; second, the world as a whole should switch to low-carbon-emissions technologies that enabled high economic growth; and third, agreement should be reached on the financial resources required to combat climate change and the critical role to be played by the public sector.

17. The success of the negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change would depend on a number of related key factors, including an agreement by developed countries to reduce their emissions to a level commensurate with their historical responsibilities; the establishment of new institutional arrangements to enable developing countries to finance emission reduction and adaptation efforts; the provision of additional public sector

funding to the current Adaptation Fund; an agreement to make use of flexibilities in intellectual property rights to promote the transfer of environmentally friendly technologies to developing countries; and the avoidance of trade protectionism.

18. His Government was already taking a number of steps to combat climate change, particularly through its initiatives to promote low-carbon-emission technologies, energy efficiency and reforestation. However, adequate financing would be needed from the international community to smooth the transition to a low-carbon economy in Pakistan.

19. The United Nations should play a central role in advancing the global sustainable development agenda, particularly in view of the need for an integrated and coordinated response by the international community to new and emerging challenges. In that context, his delegation looked forward to an early decision regarding the convening of a high-level event on sustainable development in 2012, welcomed efforts aimed at highlighting the need for sustainable mountain development and also noted its support for the adoption of a science-based approach to help countries devise their disaster reduction strategies and better adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change.

20. A member of the newly formed Consultative Group of Ministers or High-level Representatives on International Environmental Governance, Pakistan looked forward to further deliberations on the Group's recommendations during the current session of the General Assembly.

21. **Mr. Hirsch** (Norway) said that more ambitious commitments were imperative for the success of the forthcoming climate change negotiations in Copenhagen. While a significant share of the additional financial resources for both adaptation and mitigation efforts must be covered by developed countries, larger and more advanced developing countries should also agree to measurable, reportable and verifiable actions. Norway had put forward a proposal to extract resources from the carbon market through the auctioning of allowances. It also believed that a new global climate regime would provide incentives to stimulate development and the use of carbon capture and storage technologies on a global scale.

22. Medium- to long-term efforts to combat deforestation and forest degradation were of crucial importance, given the vital role that forest ecosystems

could play in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Norway would continue to allocate substantial funds for the protection and sustainable management of forests in developing countries, particularly through the programmes established by UNEP, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). It was essential for such organizations to work together closely to make the best possible use of the expertise and capacity of the multilateral system.

23. It would also be funding the preparation of a special report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change on managing the risk of extreme events and disasters.

24. Biodiversity in the form of plants, livestock and game was the wealth of the poor. However, climate change also threatened to further reduce biodiversity and hence to undermine food security. In cooperation with the United Nations, Norway had convened a series of conferences on biological diversity in the city of Trondheim; the sixth such conference would be held in February. The Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2010 should therefore lead to the establishment of new targets to improve food security for the world's poor.

25. If the international community eventually agreed to convene a high-level event on sustainable development in 2012, that event must be forward-looking and focused and should in no way overlap with or undermine the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development or other intergovernmental bodies. Additional topics for discussion at the event might include the green economy, water-related issues and reform of the international environmental governance system.

26. **Ms. Bruell-Melchior** (Monaco) said that Monaco had a long-standing tradition of promoting environmental protection. Prince Albert II had further strengthened that commitment with the establishment of a foundation to address climate change, biodiversity and water-related issues. Through the combined efforts of the foundation, its national policies and international cooperation, Monaco was promoting the sustainable and equitable management of natural resources and supported the development of innovative and ethical solutions to improve the lives of the most vulnerable populations. Monaco was determined to provide its full

support to the United Nations environmental conventions.

27. Her delegation commended the Secretary-General for convening the recent Summit on Climate Change and for highlighting the situation of the most vulnerable countries. She stressed that developing countries must be able to adapt to the harmful effects of climate change and that a binding agreement must be reached in Copenhagen to ensure a post-Kyoto regime. In that respect, her delegation welcomed the decision taken at the third World Climate Conference to establish a global framework for climate services.

28. It would be necessary for the international community to show the same ambition in 2010, the International Year of Biodiversity. The forthcoming high-level event on biodiversity should provide the political momentum necessary to set new objectives at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in Japan in October 2010.

29. The desire to achieve sustainable development required appropriate financial support. Official development assistance (ODA) must be accompanied by long-term investment aimed at capacity-building in developing countries, particularly through the transfer of technology.

30. In the light of the recent global crises, the importance of agriculture for food security and the livelihoods of small-scale farmers in developing countries, particularly women, could not be overstated. In that connection, her delegation also wished to join the appeal of the Group of 20 (G-20) that economic recovery should be based on a new green economy.

31. Lastly, she recalled that Monaco had been an active member of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction Support Group for several years and had implemented its International Strategy for Disaster Reduction national platform in 2009. Accordingly, Monaco would continue to contribute towards emergency humanitarian assistance.

32. **Mr. Ahmed** (Bahrain) said that the disasters that had occurred in 2008 had cost the lives of over 236,000 people and affected more than 200 million, as well as damage in excess of \$180 billion, thus highlighting the need at the national and international levels to find ways of reducing the risk of disasters and mitigating their consequences.

33. Such disasters, most of which had their origin in climate change and were largely unavoidable, were mainly concentrated in the developing countries, and more particularly the lower-income countries which lacked sophisticated technology such as early warning systems to alert them to an impending danger before it occurred. Adaptation to the phenomenon of climate change should become an integral part of local practice and people must be made aware of it and create a framework for national action to encourage participation in disaster risk reduction.

34. The developing countries, and particularly the small island developing States, including Bahrain, were concerned about the connection between climate change and sea-level rise and the related risks; the landlocked developing States were also at risk of economic loss as a result of natural hazards. That was a reason to comply with the obligations set forth in the Hyogo Declaration and in the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 which was based on building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters, and providing assistance to developing countries vulnerable to natural disasters and to disaster-struck States that were transitioning towards a sustainable material, social and economic recovery.

35. His delegation expressed appreciation for the Secretary-General's report (A/64/280) and agreed with him that the full implementation of all the goals contained in the Hyogo Framework for Action should be accelerated and adequate contributions be made to the United Nations Trust Fund for Disaster Reduction, which had received approximately \$7.6 million in 2008, to support the joint results of Strategy partners, including the *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction*. On 17 and 18 May 2009, Bahrain had hosted a meeting attended by the Secretary-General to launch the *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction* with the cooperation of the United Nations. Bahrain had contributed \$1 million to support the biennial publication of the *Global Assessment Report*, which had been prepared in the framework of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and was concerned with the protection of life and property against natural disasters, greenhouse gases, earthquakes, floods and rising sea levels, which all had an impact on sustainable development policies and planning at every level. There was no doubt that the 20 recommendations contained in the Report were of great interest, in particular in connection with spreading cultural

awareness of the seriousness of the risks and the importance of preventing them, Government participation, the commitment of States to the recommendations contained in the report and the creation of remote sensing centres to monitor the risks of earthquakes, floods and hurricanes.

36. He referred in that connection to the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction which, at its second session, held in Geneva in June 2009, emphasized the need for joint efforts to reduce disaster risks, adaptation to climate change and increased action at the local and community level. In that context, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of his country had announced that the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf was to establish a disaster management centre with its headquarters in Kuwait.

37. **Mr. Khair** (Sudan) said that the Commission on Sustainable Development, at its seventeenth session, had recognized the impact of the current financial crisis on developing countries and highlighted the need to ensure they had the financial resources, technology and capacity to implement Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Sudan, the largest country in Africa and the most diverse, was suffering the negative impacts of climate change. Most of its population depended on the country's vulnerable ecosystem, which was challenged by recurrent drought and floods that affected food security, water supply and public health. His delegation therefore believed that climate change must be discussed within the context of sustainable development, taking an integrated, coordinated and balanced approach to economic and social development and environmental protection.

38. The countries least responsible for climate change suffered the most from its adverse impacts and therefore had a vested interest in the success of the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference, one that could only be measured by compliance with the commitments set out in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol and the assistance provided to developing countries by the international community to address the consequences of climate change.

39. The goal of his country's National Adaptation Plan of Action was to find ways to address climate change, within the context of national economic development priorities, particularly in the areas of

agriculture, water resources and public health, and taking into account rapid population growth. Natural disasters, through their secondary effects, undermined the economies and societies, causing unemployment, population displacement, inflation, environmental degradation and the spread of epidemic diseases. Sudan's own experience in dealing with drought in East Africa had showed that natural disasters could not be addressed in isolation from economic, social and political factors; a holistic and integrated approach to threats to sustainable development was required.

40. Sudan supported the activities planned for the International Year of Biodiversity and was involved in the preparations for the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Means of implementation must be addressed effectively to achieve targets. To that end, he stressed the need for the provision of new and additional finances and technical resources to developing countries, including through the Global Environment Facility.

41. In conclusion, Sudan looked forward to contributing to the Sustainable Development Summit proposed for 2012, which would provide an opportunity to launch innovative measures.

42. **Mrs. Aitimova** (Kazakhstan) said that developing countries needed assistance to mitigate the effects of climate change. Her country supported the leading role played by the United Nations in that regard and the consensus that the Framework Convention should serve as a global platform for all climate change initiatives.

43. Kazakhstan's national strategies were aligned with global efforts. It had become an Annex I country under the Kyoto Protocol; defined 1992 as its base year; and made a commitment to keep emissions below the 1992 level for the period 2008 to 2012. In that connection, his delegation urged Committee members to support the inclusion of an item on amending annex B to the Kyoto Protocol in the agenda of The Copenhagen Conference. As an annex B country, Kazakhstan could define its own assigned amount units, in preparation for the post-Kyoto regime.

44. The opportunity presented by the Copenhagen Conference must not be missed. Her country would work with others to create a low-carbon environment for the future, and was interested in developing an international adaptation system in which advanced

countries would contribute their technological resources to assist developing countries. Kazakhstan believed that wider use of a simplified clean development mechanism would be valuable for promoting national ecologically friendly energy initiatives.

45. Energy efficient technologies must be improved and shared, and alternative sources of energy must be developed. Kazakhstan had committed to a 5 per cent target for the use of such energy.

46. **Mr. Sergeev** (Belarus) said that Belarus attached high priority to sustainable development and the achievement of the MDGs. Indeed, an integrated approach to achieve those objectives was the basis of its national strategy for sustainable development until the period 2020. However, since the attainment of the MDGs was under threat, increased cooperation among the international community had become essential.

47. Improved energy security was another key objective for the international community. Belarus therefore called on Member States to continue their work to develop an energy agenda for the United Nations.

48. Belarus wished to make a practical contribution to the international community's efforts to combat climate change. Unfortunately, that approach had not always been reciprocated by support from other countries, particularly those that had declared their interest in combating climate change but had still failed to ratify Annex B to the Kyoto Protocol. Belarus had been the first country to propose the amendment, whereby it would have voluntarily undertaken to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 5 per cent. Thus, while Belarus was grateful to the 17 countries that had already ratified the amendment, it called on all parties to the Kyoto Protocol to complete the internal procedures necessary for the amendment to enter into force as swiftly as possible.

49. In that regard, he supported the suggestion just made by the delegation of Kazakhstan that the issue of ratification of the amendment to Annex B should be included in the agenda of the forthcoming Copenhagen Climate Change Conference. His delegation also hoped that the Conference would lead to the establishment of a new regime for combating climate change in the post-Kyoto period starting in 2012.

50. The United Nations should play a key role in expanding the use of new and renewable sources of energy. In that regard, his delegation noted the important role of the interactive thematic dialogue of the General Assembly on "Energy efficiency, energy conservation and new and renewable sources of energy", held on 18 June 2009. The participants in the dialogue had made a number of specific proposals on the development of international cooperation in the area of energy, including the establishment of a mechanism to provide access to advanced energy technologies.

51. The international community should now adopt specific practical measures to promote the comprehensive use of such technologies. To that end, the Secretary-General should collect existing proposals on ways for developing and transition countries to improve their access to new and renewable technologies. The finalized recommendations could then be submitted to the General Assembly. Such work would facilitate the establishment of a fair mechanism which took into account the interests of all countries.

52. **Mr. Lwin** (Myanmar) said that although monitoring of inter-agency collaboration by the Chief Executives Board had been important, action must be taken to address remaining obstacles to implementation at the national level, including participation by all stakeholders, exchanges of best practices and lessons learned, and additional ODA for developing countries.

53. Myanmar's development policies, which covered its important forestry sector, incorporated the principles of sustainability. Its forestry policy ensured that local needs were met and forest management was sustainable and included measures to prevent deforestation and deter the uncontrolled use of fuel wood.

54. His country was developing its economic mainstay, agriculture, to eradicate poverty and to provide food security. Farmers were encouraged to adopt new techniques and were provided with inputs such as high-yield seed strains, loans and technical support. Efforts were also being made to eradicate poverty in remote and border areas and to reduce disparities among rural and urban areas.

55. The country was developing its energy sector to ensure stable supplies for business and industry and access for rural areas. Its target was energy self-sufficiency on completion of its planned hydropower

projects. Regional cooperation in the energy sector would ensure greater security and sustainability through diversification, the development and conservation of resources, continuity of supply, effective use and environmentally sound technologies.

56. Climate change had led to more frequent and more devastating natural disasters and urgent action was needed because States' efforts to achieve sustainable development and development goals were being undermined. Although States were in charge of their own development, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities must be applied to climate change. Myanmar hoped that strong and ambitious commitments would be made at the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference, and that a concrete, comprehensive and binding agreement would be reached.

57. **Mr. Barbalić** (Bosnia and Herzegovina) said that his country supported further collaboration between developed and developing countries, especially in capacity-building and technology transfers. Long-term international cooperation would be needed for developing countries to combat climate change, particularly in the areas of both clean fossil fuel use and renewable energy technologies. Resources must be dedicated to educating the world's population so that today's youth could contribute in the future to the global effort necessary to integrate clean energy sources.

58. Bosnia and Herzegovina was aware of its enormous potential for energy from biomass, and from wind and solar power. The country had worked with its neighbours to create a regional energy market. Access to technology and expertise and the high costs of implementing new developments were problems that would be overcome through greater international cooperation.

59. **Ms. Prorok** (Ukraine) underscored the role of the Commission on Sustainable Development as a coordinator, and looked forward to close cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme, relevant United Nations agencies and other institutions, including the regional commissions. The Commission had made important progress in sustainable agricultural development and Ukraine attached importance to its future work in transport, chemicals, mining, waste management and sustainable consumption and production. As a member of the Commission for the

period from 2009 to 2012, Ukraine was prepared to work more closely with other members to fulfil its mandates.

60. While it understood the importance of national and international challenges, Ukraine was still living with the lasting environmental problems caused by the Chernobyl accident and would not easily achieve comprehensive sustainable development. It hoped that the international community would support its domestic efforts in that regard, especially in the form of financing assistance.

61. Ukraine was deeply concerned by climate change and the effects of extreme weather on forests, agriculture, development in general and energy production. The Secretary-General's efforts to focus world attention were welcome and a successful outcome was expected of the Copenhagen Conference. At the Summit on Climate Change held in September, the President of Ukraine had proposed an international document that would contain a world environmental constitution. His country had set targets of greenhouse gas emission reductions of 20 per cent by 2020 and 50 per cent by 2050, compared to 1990 levels. Developed and developing countries, particularly those with economies in transition, must be allowed to apply different emissions reduction formulae that took into account their development and macroeconomic characteristics. An international mechanism for low-carbon technology transfer in that field would help to address climate change.

62. Biodiversity and natural ecosystems were important mitigating factors in climate change and international efforts must be made to uphold the Convention on Biological Diversity. At the national level, Ukraine's environmental policy placed special emphasis on the establishment of nature reserve funds.

63. **Ms. Chibesakunda** (Zambia) said that the crises in the global economy, in food and fuel and in climate change showed that the development paradigm must follow a sustainable path. Unfortunately, progress in the achievement of the goals set forth in Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development continued to be impeded by a lack of financial resources, capacity-building and technology transfer.

64. Zambia would probably not meet the Millennium Development Goals for environmental sustainability

because of its dependence on biomass energy. To avoid further problems of deforestation and land degradation, it was seeking international support for the development of clean-energy hydropower stations.

65. As the international community focused on climate change and the Copenhagen Conference, it must allocate resources to implement the Convention to Combat Desertification and the Convention on Biological Diversity because the actions required under those instruments would contribute greatly to combating climate change.

66. Sustainable agriculture to increase output in order to address the food crisis while not harming the environment was key to Zambia's sustainable development agenda. Indeed, the goals of its national agricultural development strategic plan included addressing the problems of land degradation and desertification. Zambia welcomed the Windhoek High-Level Ministerial Declaration related to achieving a sustainable green revolution in Africa; only the Convention to Combat Desertification could facilitate achievement of that goal by helping countries to deal with land degradation and desertification. Her delegation welcomed the Convention Secretariat's efforts to implement the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention and called on partners to help ensure that the Convention provided a strategic response to the global challenges of poverty eradication, food security and climate change.

67. Zambia was an African pilot country for the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries. Forest-rich countries with less competitive investment climates and few carbon credit prospects could benefit from such an approach to reduce deforestation and they deserved international support. The country would probably not meet the goal of reversing biodiversity loss by 2010 and was working towards a new target, together with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biodiversity. It would participate in the activities of the International Year of Biodiversity, 2010, and it supported the convening of a high-level event on biodiversity on 20 September 2010.

68. Zambia stressed the need for the outcome of the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference to be fair, inasmuch as developed countries should lead the way in emission reductions and significant, stable support

must be provided to developing countries so that they can implement adaptation measures and mitigation actions.

69. Given its importance, the sustainable development agenda required an extraordinary response. Only if the specific requirements of developing countries were fully addressed would the global green new deal advocated by the United Nations Environment Programme would become a reality.

70. **Ms. Pessôa** (Brazil) said that despite the enhanced understanding of the development process achieved over the past three decades, implementation of sustainable development had not happened, globalization had not resolved the challenges of sustainable development, the necessary resources for the implementation of Agenda 21 had not materialized and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals was threatened by crises that the international community had not been able to prevent. Nonetheless, the situation did not call for a new paradigm but rather implementation of sustainable development as a comprehensive framework for responses to the world's challenges.

71. Efforts to implement multilateral environmental agreements must take the form of commitments at the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference, reflecting common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, as well as historical responsibilities for emissions, in strict accordance with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol. In addition, without an international legally binding regime and the reversal of biodiversity loss, Goal 7 on ensuring environmental sustainability would not be achieved because its three pillars were interdependent. In the same way, elimination of extreme poverty and hunger would not be possible without a reversal of desertification and land degradation.

72. The comprehensive framework of sustainable development needed an adequate means of implementation; access to and transfer of technology; the elimination of subsidies and practices that externalized costs; and a reform of the Bretton Woods institutions and international governance to promote sustainable development.

73. **Mr. Dah** (Côte d'Ivoire) said that the ever more extreme and frequent weather events, such as droughts and floods, drove home the reality of climate change.

Ironically, although they produced less greenhouse gas, developing countries would suffer the most from the effects of climate change and they faced the dual challenge of achieving sustainable economic development while contributing to global efforts to combat the phenomenon. African countries, in particular, would see climate change hinder their efforts to eradicate poverty and lessen their likelihood of achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

74. As a country with an agriculture-based economy, Côte d'Ivoire was all too aware of the devastation climate change could wreak, fully supported regional and global initiatives to combat it and had undertaken domestic and regional research projects to mitigate its human and environmental impact. Côte d'Ivoire also promoted investment in environmental research and clean development mechanism projects and had launched a major reforestation effort that included options for individual, private and public planting.

75. Climate change was not merely an environmental but also a development issue which must be addressed comprehensively from a sustainable development perspective. Combating climate change was an essential part of poverty reduction strategies and current wasteful trends leading to the loss of environmental resources had to be reversed. The international community and multilateral and bilateral aid agencies must ensure that public and private investments were channelled into more climate-friendly initiatives. The provision of assistance to combat climate change must not impact negatively on the fulfilment of ODA commitments.

76. His delegation hoped that the Copenhagen Conference would yield effective strategies, as well as a financial framework and a technology transfer mechanism that would benefit emerging economies. It also welcomed the establishment of the International Renewable Energy Agency with headquarters in Masdar City, United Arab Emirates. The Agency provided an appropriate legal and institutional framework for identifying a realistic alternative to fossil fuels and would help to promote sustainable development worldwide.

77. **Mr. Al-Dhanhani** (United Arab Emirates) said that the three pillars of sustainable development — economic development, social development and environmental protection — were threatened by the global economic and financial crises and the negative

effects of climate change. While States were responsible for their own national sustainable development and poverty eradication policies and strategies, a global partnership was also important to enable developing countries to meet challenges in those areas and to achieve their development goals. Committed to providing assistance, the United Arab Emirates would continue to support United Nations development efforts while maintaining its regional, bilateral and direct contributions that benefited more than 90 developing countries.

78. Given the huge number of people in developing countries with no access to modern energy services and the impact that had on the environment and the economy, urgent international action was needed to promote wider use of new and renewable energy sources. At the same time, future demand for energy must not affect the development plans of nations. The United Arab Emirates accorded top priority to the development of a renewable energy industry and had used its oil revenues to invest in enhancing energy efficiency programmes and such sustainable energy sources as solar, wind, hydro and geothermal energy. It had enacted legislation to combat climate change, promoted awareness of a clean environment and renewable energy in the schools and was actively building a low-emission economy. The Government had allocated \$150 million to research in energy and the environment and had facilitated partnerships among interested parties to achieve a national and global sustainable environment. The country's Masdar Initiative was the result of public- and private-sector cooperation in renewable energy, nature conservation, the development of the renewable and sustainable energy industry and pilot projects in clean technologies. There was a national target to have 7 per cent of energy produced by such technologies, including hydrogen power, by 2020. As part of its strategy to use clean energy and cut emissions, the United Arab Emirates would also be establishing an atomic power facility for peaceful uses.

79. As the proud host of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), the United Arab Emirates hoped that the promotion of investment in renewable energy in developing countries would contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. It called on the international community to follow an inclusive and

non-selective approach to energy policies and development needs, promoting efficient energy use through technology and supporting research on clean fossil energy while also seeking to effectively reduce greenhouse gases.

80. International partnerships were needed to help developing countries meet the development challenges they faced. The United Arab Emirates was looking forward to the high-level meeting on sustainable development to be held in 2012, which should strengthen cooperation and partnership among nations with a view to achieving sustainable development and the Millennium Development Goals.

81. **Ms. Ellis** (Australia) said that her country was committed to working with developing countries and the international community as a whole to overcome the challenges posed by unsustainable development and climate change. It worked to address them through its aid programme, in collaboration with bilateral partners and the international community. Australia had a strong national programme to implement Agenda 21. It valued the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the role it played in achieving sustainable development goals and looked forward to a possible high-level event on sustainable development in 2012.

82. Climate change, the greatest challenge facing humankind, was compounding environmental pressures and making international action more urgent. In preparation for the Copenhagen Conference, leaders must be more fully engaged in negotiations because climate change, it was recognized, could hinder progress towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. As a leading player in efforts to cut greenhouse gas emissions, Australia's Prime Minister, Mr. Rudd, would participate actively in those discussions.

83. Emissions must be stabilized at 450 parts per million in order to limit man-made global warming to 2°C, which would require significant cuts from advanced economies by 2020. Developing countries must commit to slower increases in emissions, before an eventual reduction in absolute levels. Globally, emissions must peak no later than 2020.

84. The bold decisions that had to be made were opportunities, not threats. Emissions could be cut while strong economic growth was maintained. Australia's economic modelling showed that if all countries

cooperated to cut emissions, the average income in the developing world could grow to more than five times the current levels by 2050.

85. Australia believed that a system of national schedules would provide the flexibility needed to find common ground between developing and developed countries. Financing would be another important aspect of any international agreement. Developed countries could provide public financing to help developing countries transform their economies and adjust to the impacts of climate change. Australia was committed to scaling up public financing even beyond the post-2012 phase of the Kyoto Protocol.

86. New technologies would be needed, along with mechanisms to make them available worldwide. At the forefront of such efforts was Australia's Global Carbon Capture and Storage Institute, designed to help deliver on the goal of the Group of Eight to develop fully functioning projects to demonstrate the technology and to build capacity in developing countries. Domestically, Australia had committed to new initiatives to expand its use of renewable energy, including carbon pollution reduction, a renewable energy target of 20 per cent by 2020 and low emission energy research, development and demonstration that had a solar power component.

87. Australia encouraged all parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to aim for an ambitious outcome in Copenhagen that would permit a reduction of the damaging effects of climate change and the achievement of sustainable development goals.

88. **Mr. Kuymizakis** (Malta) said that Malta had recognized the significance of climate change in 1988, bringing it to the attention of the General Assembly, and had remained at the forefront of efforts to ensure the issue was considered a priority. The Copenhagen Conference was at the top of the international agenda and at the Summit on Climate Change, the world's leaders had agreed that the matter was the most urgent and critical issue faced by mankind.

89. Climate change was global, affecting all regions and developing and developed countries. Small island States, such as Malta, were especially vulnerable, and their socio-economic development was threatened as they faced extreme weather events, less rainfall and rising sea levels.

90. Aware of the challenges ahead, Malta supported the lead taken by the European Union in the fight against climate change. The country was not in Annex I of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change but had communicated its intention to be included and to commit to emission targets under the Kyoto Protocol. Its Government aimed to cut carbon dioxide emissions by 20 per cent by 2012, eight years before the 2020 goal.

91. Climate change was leading to floods in heavily populated coastal areas, the loss of freshwater, failed crops and other consequences of saltwater intrusion. Resettlement and migration had begun and there would be growing dangers to international peace and security.

92. Malta was highly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change. Lying in a transition zone with hot summers and mild winters, the island was affected by rising temperatures and sea levels, changing precipitation patterns, water shortages, longer sustained high temperatures and more extreme weather events. Those factors could affect health, expose more areas to drought and desertification, and reduce Mediterranean fish stocks.

93. Climate change was expected to limit water resources in the southern Mediterranean and as an island with scarce resources, Malta would be particularly affected. The Government was working to improve the energy efficiency of water distribution and desalination facilities. Policies had been introduced to make groundwater use sustainable and greater emphasis would be placed on education related to water conservation. Unlike other countries which increased water supply, Malta applied fiscal incentives to promote water efficiency in the private sector. The country believed in and encouraged public- and private-sector involvement in environmental sustainability.

94. In conclusion, he called for a concerted effort by all countries in the climate change negotiating process, and for decisive and immediate action that would lead to an agreement in Copenhagen on the way forward after 2012.

95. **Mr. Chenje** (United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)), speaking on behalf of the Executive Director of UNEP, gave a broad overview of the issues contained in the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the management review of environmental governance within the United Nations system (A/64/83-E/2009/83). The Executive Director,

who welcomed the comprehensive report of the Unit, would respond to the 12 recommendations in a report to follow. He acknowledged the considerable research undertaken and the strategic nature of the report's contents and recommendations. The findings and recommendations called on Member States to improve environmental governance. The Executive Director had made the report available to Governments and had provided presentations on its contents through the Committee of Permanent Representatives in Nairobi, and the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, which had heard a presentation on the report and its findings by its author, Mr. Inomata, in February 2009.

96. The Governing Council, in decisions taken at its twenty-fifth session, had taken note of the report and had established a high-level consultative group to "present a set of options for improving the international environmental governance to the Governing Council at its eleventh special session next year, in February, with a view to providing inputs to the United Nations General Assembly". The Consultative Group process and the subsequent conclusions to be reached by the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its eleventh special session, "would provide input to, among other things, the General Assembly's follow-up to the measures set out in paragraph 169 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome".

97. The Executive Director believed that Member States could look more closely at broader reforms that would facilitate a strong environmental pillar, able to address multiple challenges and to take advantage of emerging opportunities. For example, in the context of capacity-building and technology support, the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building could be adopted by the General Assembly as a system-wide plan. The Executive Director supported the concept of a system-wide policy orientation for the environmental protection element of sustainable development and was ready to explore the challenges and opportunities in the context of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and the Environment Management Group.

98. He strongly supported the need for a system-wide, medium-term strategy on the environment and the role of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum in adopting such a strategy. However, the UNEP medium-term strategy 2010-2013 had been prepared as a tool to implement its

environment programme and would therefore need to be revised for system-wide adoption and implementation. The Executive Director strongly supported the recommendation to propose modalities by which Member States could better formulate and manage multilateral environmental agreements without creating independent convention secretariats, which only contributed to further fragmentation and incoherence in international environmental governance.

99. System-wide coherence in environmental governance was long overdue. Both small steps and bold measures were needed. Incremental changes and broader institutional reform were not mutually exclusive and could be addressed in tandem.

*The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.*



# General Assembly

Sixty-fourth session

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### Second Committee

#### Summary record of the 31st meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 4 November 2009, at 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Mr. Mičić (Vice-Chairperson) ..... (Serbia)

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Agenda item 54: Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

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*In the absence of Mr. Park In-kook (Republic of Korea), Mr. Mičić (Serbia), Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.*

**Agenda item 53: Sustainable development (continued)**  
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- (a) Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (continued)** (A/64/169, A/64/258, A/64/274, A/64/275 and A/64/301)
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- (g) Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fifth session (continued)** (A/64/25)
- (h) Sustainable mountain development (continued)** (A/64/222)
- (i) Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy (continued)** (A/64/277)

1. **Mr. Nhleko** (Swaziland) said that his Government's determination to honour its commitments as a party to the Framework Convention on Climate Change was reflected in action already taken or envisaged, particularly under its National Development Strategy, which included efforts to ensure the sustainable and environment-friendly supply and use of energy for all. It was likewise committed to implementing Agenda 21 and had taken institutional,

regulatory and policy measures to that end. In addition, the Government was seeking to diversify the economy of the country which, having been traditionally centred on agriculture, was particularly vulnerable to the impact of climate change.

2. Swaziland had the advantage of a huge forest resource, which made it a net greenhouse-gas sink, thus enabling it to make a significant contribution to the objectives of the Framework Convention: the sustainability of that resource was therefore desirable both nationally and internationally. He referred lastly to the fundamental changes required from everyone in order for there to be a new political agreement on climate change, favourable to both developed countries and developing countries.

3. **Mr. Loulichki** (Morocco) said that the very survival of the most vulnerable countries was threatened by climate change, linked as it was to famine, displacement of populations, spread of disease and increased competition for natural resources. Drastic reductions in greenhouse gas emissions were needed to stabilize the climate. A further increase in the Earth's temperature would not only be disastrous for some individual countries; it would also cause irreversible environmental damage. It was therefore all the more necessary that the upcoming Copenhagen Conference on Climate Change should result in a fair and effective global agreement.

4. As one of the regions hardest hit by and least responsible for the effects of climate change, Africa required special attention from the international community. It faced serious consequences from the decline in its rainfall and water resources, which it was financially and technologically ill prepared to overcome. The Copenhagen Conference should take adequate measures to help African countries to adapt to climate change and pursue their economic and social development and should reach clear commitments to helping all developing countries, particularly the most vulnerable, to meet that challenge.

5. Morocco, for its part, had placed environmental concerns at the centre of its development programmes and had accordingly taken measures to rationalize its water resources, reduce even further its greenhouse gas emissions and develop renewable energy sources, particularly solar.

6. **Ms. Kiziltan** (Turkey) said that responding effectively to natural disasters, such as the two

earthquakes that had struck Turkey in 1999, was a major challenge of the century. Her country had thus played a leading role in promoting simplified entry formalities for members of international search and rescue teams and was also actively implementing the Hyogo Framework of Action, in particular through the establishment of national coordination mechanisms for disaster risk reduction, with special attention to awareness-raising and education in disaster preparedness. Disaster risk reduction needed to be more effectively integrated into sustainable development policies and should form a part of the response to climate change. In the context of the ongoing negotiations to that end, efforts should also be made to promote the use of renewable energy sources: a secure and affordable energy supply was crucial for sustainable development and must be integrated within its three pillars. Investments must therefore be made to develop energy-efficient technologies and non-fossil fuels, combined with policy initiatives and appropriate economic, market and regulatory instruments. She called on regional and international donors and financial institutions to assist developing countries in their efforts to thus build a sustainable future, for which the contributions of the private sector would also be crucial.

7. **Ms. Sriphiromya** (Thailand) said that economic development could be sustainable only if it took into account economic, social and environmental objectives. Pursuit of development along the same industrial path that countries had been following for the last two centuries would lead only to a global environmental disaster. In that respect, the global community seemed to recognize the urgency of adopting a collective response to climate change, allowing for a redefinition of development and competitiveness in terms of green industrial practices, eco-friendly consumption and sustainable production techniques. That shift in perception about development could boost rather than block economic recovery. However, in order for developing countries to make the transition to low-carbon growth, international financial and technological support was imperative.

8. The Government of Thailand aimed to achieve a balanced development strategy and had long been building resilience to external shocks, especially from globalization, in order to ensure balanced economic growth with reasonable quality of life and environmental sustainability. It had started to explore a

move to more bioenergy and alternative energy sources long before the oil crisis, and had biofuel price incentives and marketing campaigns in place, while ensuring a balance between the production of food crops and biofuels. That had helped stabilize Thailand's oil and petroleum imports over the past three years, improve its trade balance, mitigate greenhouse gas emissions from the use of fossil fuels, and benefit low-income farmers producing cash crops for biofuels. As developing countries had great potential but limited capacity to tap into renewable solar, hydro, wind and biomass energy sources, more should be done to transfer knowledge, technology and capital for that purpose. Thailand encouraged all countries to contribute to efforts to address climate change on the basis of the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. The two Ad Hoc Working Groups established under the United Nations Framework Convention negotiations should be enhanced. Her Government also welcomed the role of the United Nations in strengthening international cooperation on water management.

9. To help improve developing countries' disaster preparedness and risk reduction measures, and in the light of the Asia and Pacific region's particular vulnerability to natural disasters, developed countries should provide technology transfer, capacity-building and financial support. Initiatives such as the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN-ISDR) and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission had an important role to play in building networks among national early warning systems. Thailand had been involved in strengthening regional disaster resilience, especially through the establishment of the Tsunami Regional Trust Fund of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to set up an early warning system for the region, and invited interested donors to contribute to that Fund.

10. The International Year of Biodiversity in 2010 would be a perfect opportunity to raise public awareness on that issue, recognizing the need for joint private/public sector efforts to reduce the rate of biodiversity loss. The Berlin Declaration on Private Donorship for Biodiversity was a valuable initiative.

11. **Ms. Kaludjerović** (Montenegro) said that the multiple current crises demanded a collective, coordinated response from all stakeholders, including NGOs and the private sector, while an ambitious,

effective and fair agreement needed to be sought in Copenhagen to address the effects of climate change. Montenegro, as a self-proclaimed ecological State, promoted the synergy between development and environment and based its national strategy for sustainable development on the internationally agreed principles, including those enshrined in the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21. Her Government was particularly concerned about sustainable mountain development and had taken specific measures for the development of Montenegro's own extensive mountainous regions, geared to sustainable tourism and biodiversity protection. Her country had also joined others in the region in establishing a network of protected areas and developing biodiversity priorities. It recognized the essential importance of the energy sector for sustainable development, as well as the adverse effects it could have on the environment. While developing countries had a part to play, in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, in reducing greenhouse emissions and achieving energy efficiency, developed countries were called on to provide leadership and resources to ensure effective adaptation and mitigation measures. Montenegro itself faced significant challenges in its energy sector: it was aiming to achieve the European Union target of a 20 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020, in particular by further developing its hydroelectric, solar and wind power potential.

12. **Mr. Lakhal** (Tunisia) said that the necessary collective and holistic response to the challenge of sustainable development required the establishment of a genuine partnership and increased technological, financial and scientific cooperation in a spirit of solidarity. His delegation accordingly supported the proposal for a "Rio + 20" summit on sustainable development in 2012, which would offer an opportunity to take stock of progress and identify ways of securing the participation of the most vulnerable groups, particularly women and young people. Sustainable development was a major national policy choice of his Government, which had long been moving in that direction, even before the 1992 Earth Summit; the environment was a key concern in that policy, as reflected in increased investments in environmental protection, efforts to combat desertification and rationalization of energy consumption.

13. More than 75 per cent of the national territory was at risk of desertification, exacerbated by the effects of climate change. While the African continent was the region in the world most affected, the phenomenon was universal and, for that reason, Tunisia had been among the first countries to ratify the Convention to Combat Desertification and was actively committed to its implementation. Unfortunately, however, funding for that purpose had been steadily declining, owing to increased attention to other issues, in particular the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Tunisia recognized the importance of that issue as well and continued to spare no effort to that end; indeed, efforts to counter the effects of global warming demanded the increased mobilization of the international community. His country was also contributing to international cooperative efforts to promote the necessary mitigation and adaptation measures. In that spirit, it was essential that the upcoming Copenhagen Conference should result in an ambitious, legally binding agreement, based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, with a view to a concerted global response to climate change. It should include financial support for the most vulnerable countries, which should complement and not replace funding to combat desertification and poverty, with a view to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

14. **Mr. Mohamed** (Maldives) said that small island developing States faced specific challenges because of their isolation, small size and vulnerability to external shocks. The Maldives was particularly affected by the threat to coral reefs, which were the lifeline of the nation, being the basis of its two primary economic activities, fisheries and tourism. Increasing climate change would exacerbate that threat. His country therefore sought the support of the international community in stabilizing its economic and environmental conditions, so that it would not have to continue diverting its limited resources away from strategic development. The entire international community had an obligation to address the injustices of climate change, as part of a comprehensive, rights-informed approach to sustainable and just development, based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

15. **Mr. Talbot** (Guyana) said that Guyana was wholly committed to the pursuit of sustainable development, in particular through efforts to conserve

and use its environment and natural resources for the benefit of its population. However, the impact of climate change, including extreme and unpredictable weather conditions in recent years and the threat of rising sea levels, had made that challenge all the more difficult. Some 90 per cent of the country's population and the bulk of its economic activity were confined to a narrow coastal strip of land about one meter below mean sea level: any rise in sea level would consequently lead to significant economic loss. Indeed, many small island and low-lying coastal developing States would cease to exist without urgent, ambitious and decisive action by the international community to reduce global greenhouse emissions and help those States to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change.

16. The Copenhagen Conference must reach the necessary agreement to that end and must also ensure adequate financial and technological support so as to benefit from the significant abatement potential of the developing world, especially rainforest countries like Guyana, which needed protection against deforestation. His Government was already developing a strategy to preserve the country's pristine rainforest in return for flows of financing to be used for investments in low-carbon economic activities. The challenges of climate change and sustainable development called for more efficient and effective environmental governance at the global level and a new system of global interrelationships based on social justice and ecological equity. Guyana remained actively committed to those goals.

17. **Mr. Dabiré** (Burkina Faso) said that his country's ecosystem was undergoing continuing rapid degradation owing to the combined effects of population pressure, extensive crop-growing, use of chemicals, accelerated urbanization and pollution. His Government had therefore put in place an environment plan for sustainable development, which included air pollution control, improved sanitary conditions and awareness-raising activities. Burkina Faso remained firmly committed to supporting the international community's efforts to combat environmental degradation, as reflected in its recent hosting in Ouagadougou of the Seventh World Forum on Sustainable Development. He expressed the hope that the deliberations of that Forum would contribute to the success of the upcoming Copenhagen Conference; in particular, developed countries should on that occasion take the courageous and historic decision to reduce

greenhouse gas emissions and provide substantial and predictable assistance to developing countries which, while being the least responsible for pollution, were the primary victims of climate change. He concluded by welcoming the initiative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to organize in November 2009 a World Summit on Food Security, given that one sixth of the world population was suffering from malnutrition.

**Agenda item 54: Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)** (A/64/8, A/64/65, A/64/260, A/64/317 and E/2009/80)

18. **Ms. Osman** (Sudan), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that UN-Habitat played a key role in the pursuit of sustainable development in view of the unprecedented scale and pace of urbanization in developing countries and the concomitant need for additional houses, infrastructure and services. Sustainable patterns of consumption and production were called for, as well as special attention to the urban poor, who were at risk of being further marginalized by the economic and financial crisis.

19. While welcoming the increased resources of the Programme, the Group of 77 and China were concerned about the imbalance between earmarked and non-earmarked contributions and dependence on a small number of donors. Funding thus continued to be unpredictable, affecting the Programme's ability to function satisfactorily. His delegation called on the international community to provide predictable financial support for the goals of the Habitat Agenda, in view of its focus on critical aspects of human livelihoods, basic needs and poverty eradication.

20. The Group supported moves to mainstream the sustainable development agenda into core development programmes and activities, in particular through the use of a results-based framework. The documents setting out the related action plan marked an important step in the coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda at the country level. The Group further supported the regional ministerial meetings on housing and urban development; they in turn needed to focus on integrating the Habitat Agenda and related internationally agreed development goals into national plans and strategies. UN-Habitat and all other

development partners should continue to play a major role in support of developing countries' efforts to provide shelter for all and put in place sustainable human settlements.

21. **Mr. Ström** (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the European Union; the candidate countries Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro; and, in addition, Armenia, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova, said that sustainable urban development, including an effective response to the social challenges of urbanization, was a prerequisite for achieving the MDGs. Cities were ill prepared to cope with the increasing phenomenon of urbanized poverty, which called for innovative approaches involving all stakeholders. As major contributors of greenhouse gas emissions, they had a key role in climate mitigation and adaptation, entailing more appropriate land-use planning, more accountable urban management, further development of affordable public infrastructure and good urban governance.

22. The European Union therefore supported the intention of UN-Habitat to work increasingly with local urban authorities in support of their efforts to reduce the ecological footprint of cities and improve their resilience to the effects of climate change. Its Cities and Climate Change Initiative was particularly welcome in that regard. UN-Habitat should continue to assist Member States in achieving the internationally agreed goals, including those relating to adequate shelter for all and slum upgrading and prevention. It had an important role in enhancing the living conditions of slum dwellers, which had taken on a new urgency and went far beyond what was required by the MDGs. Its decision to concentrate its work on core focus areas would help it to play a leadership role and act as a catalyst in promoting sustainable urbanization; at the same time, it would strengthen its normative mandate, its contribution to the establishment of best practices and its encouragement of funding of housing for the poor. His delegation stressed the importance in that regard of local ownership, the responsibility of programme country authorities in the implementation process and the need for public-private partnerships and investments in housing and urban development.

23. The European Union supported all measures to strengthen UN-Habitat in accordance with its comparative advantages and limited resources and as a

basis for completing its internal institutional reform. It welcomed the consensus recently reached by the Governing Council of the Programme on the appropriate delivery of basic services: the local authorities had an important role in that regard, in collaboration with other partners. It further welcomed its ongoing governance review and looked forward to seeing the impact of the recent evaluation of the previous World Urban Forums on the next one, to be held in March 2010. The European Union strongly supported the UN-Habitat Gender Equality Action Plan: women were in the majority among the urban poor and faced more challenges than men in the urban context. Similarly, young people had an important part to play in efforts towards sustainable urban development; girls in particular, being especially vulnerable to discrimination, needed additional support to realize their potential as key development partners.

24. **Mr. Bowoleksono** (Indonesia), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which aligned itself with the statement made by the representative of the Sudan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the political commitment to sustain global economic recovery must be translated into pro-poor policies, such as more efficient housing policies. Housing finance systems and regulatory frameworks should reflect the needs of the poor and low-income groups, including women, and ensure increased access to land and credit and protection from arbitrary eviction. To overcome the challenges related to slums, the poor should be given greater access to credit for obtaining affordable mortgages, following the example of UN-Habitat's urban and rural poor programmes for housing credit. The resources made available to UN-Habitat must be maintained and increased, preferably through multi-year commitments. Furthermore, sustained action was imperative to implementing the Habitat Agenda, and the Programme's 2008-2013 medium-term strategic and institutional plan was a valuable tool to that end.

25. He expressed support for convening a United Nations conference on housing and sustainable urban development (Habitat III) in 2016, noting that adjustments would have to be made to the Agenda in the light of the sustainable urbanization and urban development challenges which had emerged since 1996.

26. UN-Habitat's partnership agreements with other United Nations agencies, regional and subregional

organizations and the private sector were helping to raise awareness of housing as a productive sector. The Programme should expand its operational focus to include climate change, in the light of the clear connection between urbanization and climate change. Indonesia would be hosting the third Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development, focusing on cities and climate change. In the context of urbanization, cities would need to substantially reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, otherwise uncontrolled climate change would have far-reaching, life-threatening consequences worldwide. Social housing programmes would need to be energy-efficient and environmentally sound. In order to adapt to rising sea levels, integrated coastal and ocean management was needed. ASEAN was building its capacity to manage its cities through sustainable city programmes such as the joint UN-Habitat/UNEP Sustainable Cities Programme. Lastly, nations needed to enhance their cooperation with UN-Habitat by reaffirming their commitment to implement the Habitat Agenda, through major investments in housing and urban development, along with measures to control climate change and sustained support for the work of UN-Habitat.

27. **Ms. Greenaway** (Antigua and Barbuda), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), which aligned itself with the statement made by the representative of the Sudan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the global and financial crises were having unrelenting negative impacts on CARICOM countries, causing their Governments to experience drastic revenue shortfalls in a short period of time and jeopardizing their policies to provide low-cost, affordable housing for low-income groups. CARICOM countries were also extremely vulnerable to the negative impacts of climate change, which urgently required a more coordinated and comprehensive response. In that respect, she recognized the important role cities played in helping to bolster mitigation strategies, as well as the heightened need for adaptation strategies in small island developing States to take into account small towns and cities, which were particularly vulnerable. CARICOM thus welcomed UN-Habitat's increased attention to the convergence of the human settlements agenda and the global environment agenda, and the nexus between urban development and climate change in particular, and hoped that focus would be extended to include the

Caribbean subregion as part of a wider strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean.

28. Urban youth development was a CARICOM priority, and there was much scope and need for programme support from UN-Habitat in that area. As the challenges to the sustainable development of small island developing States continued to mount, United Nations development entities must improve their support to those States' national development plans and programmes, and UN-Habitat should strengthen and mainstream its work in the Caribbean as part of wider involvement in those States in that respect. The mid-point review of the medium-term strategic and institutional plan for the period 2008-2013 was a good opportunity to ensure that the sustainable development of small island developing States became part of UN-Habitat's strategic focus, as one aspect of the international development agenda related to human settlements. CARICOM welcomed the recommendation made by the UN-Habitat Governing Council to convene a third United Nations conference on housing and sustainable urban development in 2016.

29. **Mr. Liu Yuyin** (China) said that the human settlements problem should be addressed within the framework of sustainable development and the international community should make concerted efforts towards the recovery and growth of the world economy in order to create conditions conducive to human settlements development. It should focus on the areas of economic development, social progress, environmental protection and population growth. Furthermore, the issue of human settlements should be tackled in the light of the specific conditions of the countries concerned, which should act within their own capabilities and learn from one another. International cooperation and partnerships for the development of human settlements must be strengthened, particularly through fulfilment of finance and technology commitments relating to developing countries. Resources should be pooled for the comprehensive improvement of habitats, with national Governments leading those efforts while mobilizing broad participation from all of society and integrating resources from all relevant sectors.

30. The Government of China had given priority to human settlements development and had implemented the commitments made at the Habitat II Conference and the special session of the General Assembly to review and appraise the implementation of the Habitat

Agenda. It had focused on the integrated and harmonious development of urban and rural areas and on economic growth and social advancement. It had adopted measures to raise people's living standards and build a secure, healthy and pleasant habitat. A number of Chinese projects, cities and individuals had won United Nations habitat awards, and the country had itself started to issue awards for model cities and projects.

31. **Mr. Rupani** (India) was pleased that affordable housing finance systems had been the theme of the recent session of the UN-Habitat Governing Council. As many initiatives launched by UN-Habitat, particularly the experimental reimbursable seeding operations, had the potential to make a real impact, the international community should fully support and finance those efforts. India was also encouraged by recognition in the Secretary-General's report (A/64/260) of the broader need for Governments to adopt proactive housing policies, rather than leaving the sector to market forces. India had taken a number of initiatives to improve housing and habitats in both urban and rural areas, including through its National Urban Housing and Habitat Policy, under which data on low-income households were being collected and efforts were being made to provide basic services to the poor, including affordable shelter, water and sanitation. There were also programmes in rural areas to help build and upgrade dwellings for the poor through lump-sum financial assistance. India was developing and promoting cost-effective, environmentally friendly and disaster-resistant housing technologies. Strengthening public-private partnerships was an integral part of India's housing policies and helped to create jobs, especially in construction and for the urban poor. Other initiatives provided gainful employment to the urban unemployed or underemployed through self-employment ventures or provided wage employment. Still others focused on building low-cost sanitation units and creating economic infrastructure. Green building codes and energy-efficient transport options had also been adopted.

32. In the area of South-South cooperation, India had been sharing its experience and know-how in the field of housing development with other developing countries; the international community must provide financial resources to UN-Habitat to further facilitate such cooperation. India was concerned about the severe imbalance between earmarked and non-earmarked

contributions to the Programme. Progress must be made towards achieving the goal set out in the Secretary-General's report of stable, predictable funding for UN-Habitat, preferably through multi-year financing.

33. **Ms. Khamati-Kilonzo** (Kenya) said that, against the backdrop of the global and economic crisis, the global housing crisis was getting worse, especially in the developing world, and the right to adequate shelter was becoming more difficult to ensure. It was estimated that two thirds of the world's population would be living in cities and towns by 2050. It was thus urgent for the international community to address the challenges of urbanization, including the growth of slums and other informal settlements. In addition, climate change had serious implications for human settlements and sustainable urbanization. Many major cities were highly vulnerable to climate change because of their coastal location, for example, or poor planning. The human settlements agenda and the global environmental agenda were indeed converging with cities at the nexus of climate change adaptation and mitigation, as mentioned in the Secretary-General's report. In that respect, cities had a critical role to play in addressing climate change.

34. Providing adequate and decent housing in a sustainable environment was a critical component of Kenya's "Vision 2030" plan, which aimed to improve the quality of life for all Kenyans. Indeed, the country's urban areas had suffered from poor planning, which had led to the proliferation of informal settlements with poor housing and little or no infrastructure services. To respond to Kenya's rapid urbanization, the Government was undertaking drastic reforms for improved urban planning strategies. Despite the global financial and economic crisis, it was implementing an ambitious programme aimed at producing 200,000 housing units annually by 2012. Other initiatives included building national urban planning capacity, implementing a national decentralization and devolution policy, promoting capacity-building for the building industry, improving access to finance, promoting low-cost housing, and introducing legislative and regulatory reforms. Nevertheless, in the light of its limited resources, the Government had identified key sectors, including housing and infrastructure development, for investment by the private sector and foreign investors. It was making optimal use of the resources available, in partnership with financial institutions, to develop and

encourage housing projects for middle- and low-income populations, but such endeavours would also need support from development partners. A project to upgrade Nairobi's Kibera slum was an example of what could be accomplished by Governments working with UN-Habitat and other development partners to construct decent, low-cost high-rise housing units. Her delegation noted the progress cited in the Secretary-General's report and encouraged further progress towards implementation of the medium-term strategic institutional plan for 2008-2013, affordable housing finance, South-South cooperation in human settlements and global and regional consultative processes. UN-Habitat must be adequately supported through financial and other resources; she thus urged those Member States in a position to do so to increase their contributions to the UN-Habitat funds, activities and projects, and urged donors to scale up their support to its normative and operational activities.

35. **Mr. Lee** (Singapore) said that, as cities were already responsible for 75 per cent of global energy consumption and 80 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions, a concerted effort must be made to strike a balance between economic growth, environmental protection and high quality of life for urban dwellers. There was a need to build cities that were not just liveable, but also sustainable. Although the global financial and economic crisis presented new challenges to implementing the Habitat Agenda and Governments might be tempted to see sustainable development as an unaffordable luxury, the crisis should be seen as an opportunity to strengthen sustainable development efforts, for example by boosting resource consumption efficiency.

36. Singapore had decided to pursue long-term economic growth and environmental sustainability by upholding three principles: maintaining an integrated planning approach to align energy, transport, industry and urban planning policies for a long-term view of its needs and circumstances; promoting economic growth and a sustainable living environment in a pragmatic and cost-effective manner with a view to adopting long-term measures, even if they entailed short-term costs; and adjusting to new technologies and the global environment, by building up its capabilities and testing new technologies in areas such as land-use planning, water technologies, vertical greenery, green buildings and solar energy. It had backed up those principles with good governance and sound policies, such as the World

Bank — Singapore Urban Hub project launched in June 2009, which would leverage the Bank's global knowledge and Singapore's recognized experience in urban management and finance to provide quality advice and technical assistance relating to global best practices on urban challenges. Singapore had hosted the World Cities Summit in June 2008 and would be hosting the second Summit in June 2010, which would focus on building liveable, and sustainable cities. Singapore believed that countries could form global partnerships to develop innovative prototypes for sustainable cities, and in that respect, had been jointly developing the Tianjin Eco-city with China, which it hoped would serve as an example for other such environmentally friendly, socially harmonious and resource-efficient cities in the future. Urban sustainable development would require collaborative innovation in the development of cities, involving the public, private and people sectors, and collective efforts from both developed and developing countries.

37. **Mr. Aguiar Patriota** (Brazil) said that, as Member States sought to further strengthen UN-Habitat's work programme, they should be mindful of the more than one billion persons currently living in slums in the developing world, estimated to reach 1.4 billion by 2020. That population should be ensured adequate and accessible housing, including through special financing mechanisms and pro-poor market stabilization measures geared towards ensuring housing ownership and property titles among lower-income segments of society and improving conditions for attaining the MDGs. Population growth and the unparalleled scale and pace of urbanization, especially in developing countries, would require a rapid response by Governments to provide affordable, sustainable housing. The housing sector was important to the overall health of the economy and in that respect the public sector had a key role to play.

38. The Government of Brazil had created a Ministry of the Cities to combat social inequalities and increase access to affordable housing, sanitation and transport. The rapid, unplanned urbanization in Brazil had left 6.6 million families without shelter, more than 10 per cent of urban households without access to drinking water, and almost half without sewage services. That situation required strong commitment at the national level, but also more and improved international cooperation. The Government had launched a programme for accelerated growth aimed at promoting economic

growth and social inclusion through investment in infrastructure, logistics and energy infrastructure and in social and urban development. A major priority of its urban development pillar was projects for slum upgrading, particularly in metropolitan areas, with a focus on climate change mitigation, reduction of the environmental impact of urbanization, and urban integration with transport infrastructure. Brazil looked forward to sharing its experiences with other Governments, civil society and stakeholders at the fifth session of the World Urban Forum, which Brazil would be hosting in March 2010, with the theme of bridging the urban divide. To strengthen the coordination of public policies in the housing sector in accordance with the UN-Habitat Agenda, international cooperation, adequate policy options and, most importantly, the right kind of financing resources, provisions and instruments were urgently needed. In that respect, he hoped for greater involvement in the UN-Habitat work programme of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and other actors, including the private sector.

39. **Mr. Al-Alawi** (Bahrain) said that, in line with its practice of working systematically in partnership with United Nations bodies and institutions for the achievement of comprehensive social, economic and cultural development, his country had launched the Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa Habitat Award with the aim of promoting initiatives and innovative solutions for sustainable development. It had also contributed support for the publication of *The State of the World's Cities 2008/2009*, the theme of which was harmonious urbanization. It firmly believed that urban planning was essential to ensuring a safe and sustainable living environment for low-income earners and to preventing chaotic urban expansion, an approach underlined by the theme of World Habitat Day 2009, "Planning our urban future". On that basis, it had elaborated a 20-year national strategy consistent with the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements and the Millennium Development Goals, the intention being to raise the living standards of its citizens.

40. Additionally recognizing the need to preserve cultural heritage and identity, Bahrain had recently implemented various housing and amenities projects and sought to improve town and village living conditions to cope with the needs of its fast-growing population. Some villages had been rebuilt as model areas equipped with all the health, education and public

services essential to modern society and approximately US\$ 26 million was annually budgeted for the continuing implementation of a programme for the renovation and reconstruction of dilapidated housing. Also under way was a feasibility study for an affordable smart building project with specifications and standards geared to the country's climate and environment.

41. Concerted multilateral action in the spirit of shared responsibility was essential to meeting such modern-day challenges as the financial crisis, epidemic disease, diminishing food security and climate change. The grave impacts of those challenges were most felt by the developing countries, which had least contributed to their creation. Itself a small island developing country, Bahrain was concerned by the critical threat that climate change posed to peace and security in the developing world. It consequently supported the Cities and Climate Change Initiative and the World Urban Campaign established by UN-Habitat and furthermore endorsed the recommendation, set forth in paragraph 84 of the Secretary-General's report (A/64/260), concerning the need for all stakeholders to be involved in the endeavours to achieve sustainable urban development. Support and encouragement were vital to enabling UN-Habitat to address the challenges resulting from rapid and chaotic urbanization, in which context the convening of a United Nations conference on housing and sustainable urban development (Habitat III) in 2016 was likely to be worthwhile.

42. **Mr. Wolfe** (Jamaica) said that his country's commitment to the work of UN-Habitat was demonstrated through its hosting of the eighteenth session of the Assembly of Ministers and High-Level Authorities of Housing and Urban Development in Latin America and the Caribbean in July 2009. That meeting had concluded with a declaration appropriately highlighting the decline of available resources for housing and urban development due to the global economic crisis and had recommended the mapping of natural disaster risk and vulnerability as a way to implement collective measures for disaster prevention and mitigation. The Assembly had also supported the preparation of the first UN-Habitat regional report on the state of Latin American and Caribbean cities.

43. Jamaica, together with Antigua and Barbuda, Haiti, and Trinidad and Tobago, were current beneficiaries of Phase I of UN-Habitat's Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme in the African, Caribbean

and Pacific Group of countries and efforts were being made to operationalize that programme in Jamaica. While his Government appreciated the work being undertaken in the subregion, UN-Habitat should seek to further engage countries in addressing the needs and concerns that had multiplied with the onset of the financial crisis. Of particular concern was the shortfall in resources for housing and urban development. The international community should thus increase resources to enable UN-Habitat to better implement its mandate. Financial investment in the urban poor in developing countries was of benefit to the entire international economic system.

44. **Mr. Gotta** (Ethiopia) said that the Government of Ethiopia had developed and started to implement a national urban development programme in 2006, which had helped to reduce poverty, create urban jobs and improve livelihood, form fixed capital, promote investment in housing and upgrade slums. The Programme was also geared to contributing to the MDGs and targets of halving the proportion of people living on less than \$1.23 a day and the percentage of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water, in addition to significantly improving the lives of slum dwellers. A major component of that Programme related to integrated housing with a view to reducing urban poverty and unemployment, providing adequate housing, reducing slums, implementing urban upgrading, and enhancing the capacity of the construction industry. Those efforts aimed to create 200,000 jobs, construct twice as many houses and support the creation of 10,000 small construction enterprises. The Programme's other component related to micro- and small-scale enterprise development, which aimed to create 1.5 million jobs. The Government had also provided small-scale enterprises with various support services, and the Government had launched a major integrated urban infrastructure programme in 19 urban centres. Those efforts clearly demonstrated the Government's commitment to achieving sustainable urban development. The Government of Ethiopia had also put in place several policies to encourage private-sector investment in housing, which had been delivering encouraging dividends, and would redouble its efforts to provide adequate housing and related infrastructure. However, mobilizing affordable housing finance and innovative technology to build low-cost housing was a major challenge, and his Government called on UN-Habitat to explore ways in which countries could improve

access to the requisite financing and technology, including through the dissemination of global best practices. Lastly, Ethiopia supported the Secretary-General's call for convening Habitat III in 2016, and the call for adequate, stable and predictable funding, preferably through multi-year financing.

45. **Mr. Adekeye** (Nigeria) said that, as part of his Government's efforts to address the problem of affordable housing finance, Nigeria had hosted the second African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development in Abuja in July 2008, with Millennium Goal 7, target 11, as its theme. That Conference had provided guidelines for housing, slum upgrading and urban development. The Government had sought to tackle that challenge through partnerships with the private sector by offering land at subsidized rates to its citizens and issuing bonds for social housing providers, ultimately benefiting citizens. Innovative financing mechanisms like UN-Habitat's experimental reimbursable seeding operations and Slum Upgrading Facility and programmes which facilitated the delivery of pro-poor affordable housing finance systems should be supported. The experimental reimbursable operations in particular had to disburse soft loans to interested organizations and bodies in some developing countries.

46. The World Urban Forum remained a strong platform for Member States and other habitat partners to exchange ideas and best practices on shelter and sustainable urban development, and should improve its partnership with the private sector. As a new strategy was required for the realization of the Habitat Agenda's twin goals of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements in an urbanizing world, the Government of Nigeria endorsed the proposal to convene Habitat III in 2016, which would provide an appropriate forum and opportunity for taking stock of the implementation of the Agenda, while also laying out strategies for the future.

*The meeting rose at 6 p.m.*